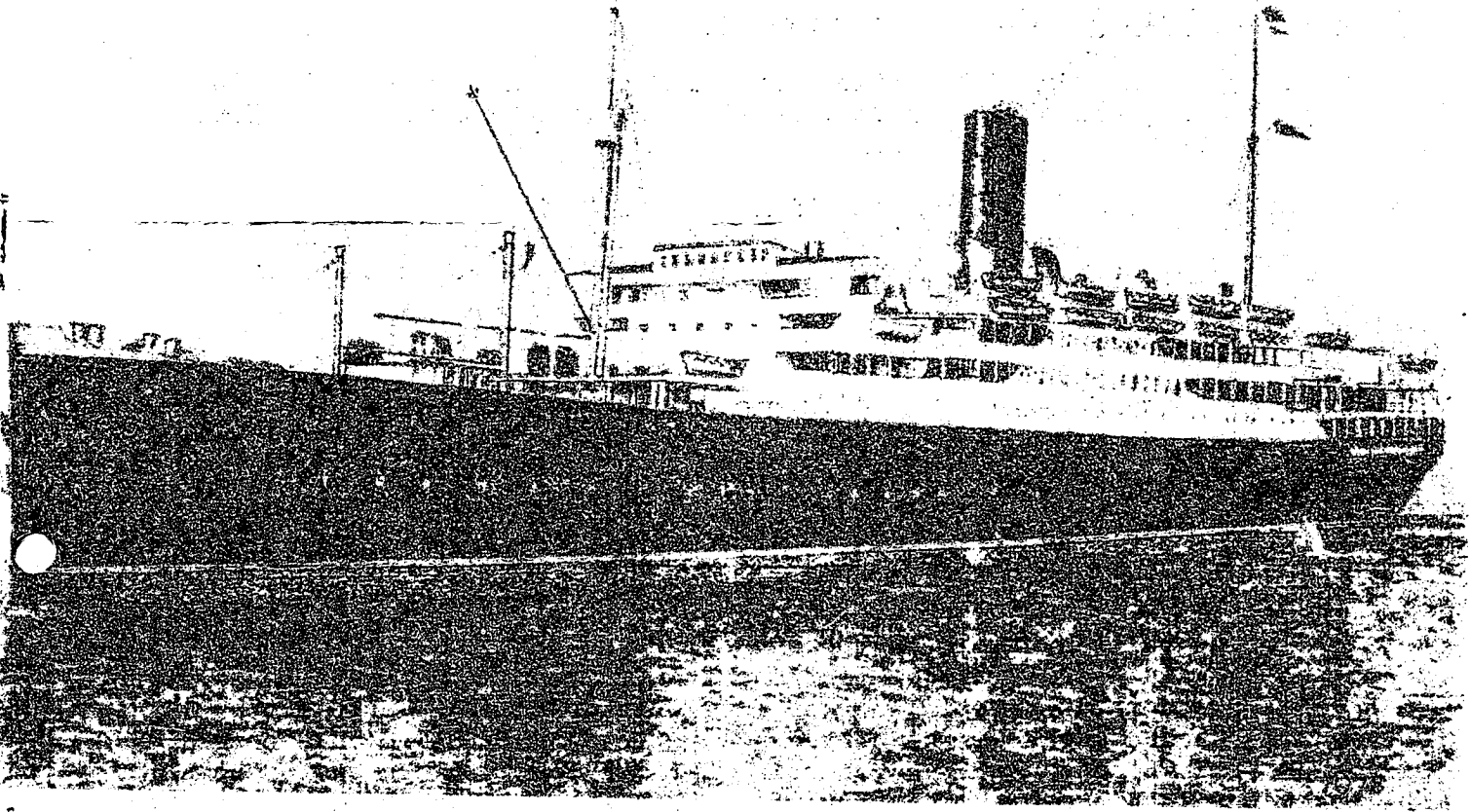
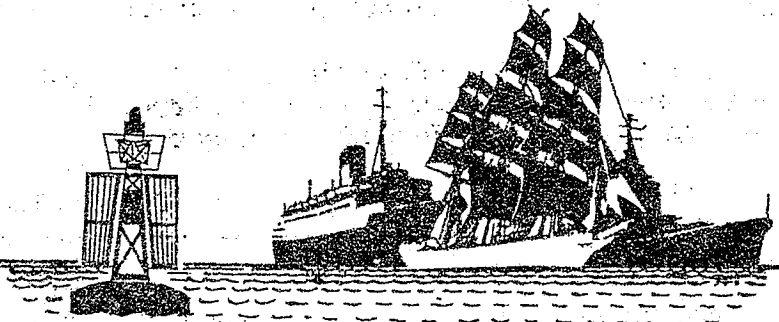
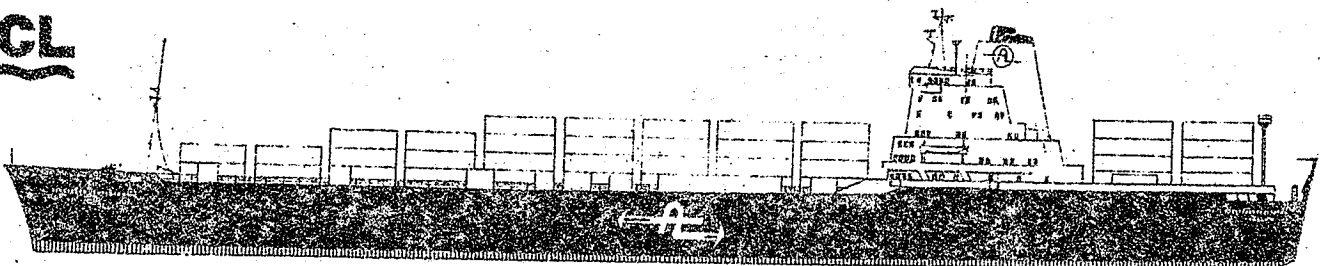


BLACK JACK

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY



ACL



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PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS July - September 1979

Unless advised otherwise all meetings are held in Lecture Room B, Nuffield Theatre Building, University of Southampton. Meetings commence at 7-30pm. All meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month.

Tues 10 July Branch Slide Competition for 1978 Slides
Members are invited to submit up to 6 slides for the
competition. Entries should be forwarded to the Branch
Secretary.

Tues 14 August Film Evening

Tues 11 Sept Collectors Evening - YOUR collection - whatever!
Postcards - stamps - menus - plates - cups etc -- in
fact anything of nautical interest.

Please see article on page 11 of this issue

Letters to the Editors

As a follow up to the article on the Dundee, Perth & London Sg Co in BJ No 30 page 4 et seq and Arthur Taylors mention of it in "Round the Port" in the Echo, we have received an interesting letter from Eric Johnson of Southampton. During the second world war he served aboard the DP&L's PERTH as a convoy signalman for two and a half years during her service as a convoy rescue ship. Whilst on her one stormy night about 500 miles east of Cape Race he tried to contact the Commodore's ship, the VILLE DE TAMATAVE, which was slowly sinking after her number two hatch had been stove in the following morning she had disappeared! (Mr Johnson discovered later that one of the signalmen on her was a friend from earlier days!)

A sequel to all this was that William Hickey in the Daily Express reported that a small photo of the wife of the Captain of the VILLE DE TAMATAVE was found inside a fish which had been gutted after being taken into Oban on a trawler! The article also mentioned that the ship had been lost by enemy action, which was incorrect - unless by the "enemy" it meant the weather. Mr Johnson wrote to the Express putting the facts straight but never received a reply.

So there you are; a little human story to add colour to one of our fleet histories.

THIS QUARTER'S COVER: Top: SCYTHIA - see page 10 drawing by Eric Law

Bottom: ATLANTIC CAUSEWAY - see page 9

drawing by Nigel Robinson

RETROSPECT

Paddle steamers are, alas, ships of the past. In this article a late member of the Southampton Branch gives his reminiscences of the good old days of the paddlers. It was written in 1963 under the pseudonym "Feathering Floats"

.....

It was not until 1919 that I really came to 'know' the Southampton Fleet, although I had heard of it and actually 'met' some of the steamers prior to the 1914-18 war. I became paddle-minded in 1903 while living in my native area of Greenwich and my early interest was on the Thames. Subsequently, in 1907, it was extended to the South coast, but not so far westward as Southampton. From advertising matter in London I knew the fleet consisted of Balmoral (the flagship), Lorna Doone and Bournemouth Queen (1908) as the major excursion vessels, all of which had white funnels and a general aspect of the renowned Campbell fleet. There was Stirling Castle on excursion work from Bournemouth and Princess Mary, built in 1911 for the dual purpose of excursion and passage work. I never saw either of these and both were lost during the 1914-18 war.

Victorian 'Passage' boats

The more numerous fleet consisted of Victorian paddlers with open fore-deck and, in most cases, narrow after-saloons. These were the 'passage' boats engaged in all-the-year-round service between Southampton and Cowes. In summer, rigidly from 1 May until 30 September, these vessels went on to Ryde, Southampton and Portsmouth Harbour. One of them later ran the Company's service between Bournemouth and Swanage. They were an odd lot and mostly not at all pleasing to the eye. The larger one, Queen, built in 1902, was an advance on the earlier ones and boasted something of a fore-cabin. She had her promenade deck extended to the sides of the ship and right to the stern. After the war this deck was cut back to the normal aft end of the saloon. Perhaps I should not really include the Queen in the 'passage' fleet because I never actually remember her in passage work. While built for it and having two class accommodation, in my memory she was used as a subsidiary to the excursion fleet. She was painted in the 'passage' style, with her two narrow funnels, forward of the paddles, painted buff. Her bridge was forward of the funnels.

Next we have Solent Queen, the 'queen' of the 'passage' paddlers for many years. She had two thin funnels forward of the paddles and retained her bridge between the paddle boxes throughout her long career. The other units were Duchess of York (later Duchess of Cornwall) and Prince of Wales, single-funnelled, with small paddle wheels and wooden floats. The latter could easily be identified at night by her flickering masthead oil light. Princess Helena, Princess Beatrice and Her Majesty, single-funnelled, with large paddle wheels and steel floats made up the remainder. Solent Queen had large wheels and steel floats and Queen small ones with wooden floats, until 1928 when new wheels with steel floats were fitted.

Lord Elgin

I must not forget Lord Elgin, for many years on excursion work from Bournemouth and Swanage, or Boscombe. She was a class apart and very much of an individual with her upright funnel in later years and certainly all the time I have known her she was engaged on cargo carrying between Southampton and Cowes. She was part of the waterfront about the Town Quay and when away there seemed to be something missing. Dirty and lovable, she captured many hearts and it was really sad when we came to say 'Good-bye' to her just before she was broken up. One of our members photographed me talking to Captain Sewley on that occasion and remarks were passed about my troubled expression!

Peculiarities and inconsistencies

Reverting to the 'passage' boats prior to 1914. All, except Queen had their bridges between the paddle boxes. They were pushed forward of the funnels later. None of the vessels had bow-rudders to help them back out of Cowes.

The Southampton, Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Company Limited with their long, cumbersome title, had many peculiarities and inconsistencies compared with contemporary concerns. The dining saloons of Balmoral, Lorna Doone and Bournemouth Queen were on the main deck and the social saloon below-contrary to general practice elsewhere. The 'passage' boats however, including Queen,

were right way about!

Then we come to colouring. The three excursion ships had white funnels and the passage boats, including Queen at this time, buff ones. Exception was made for the Swanage boat, Princess Helena, about 1912, which had a red funnel. Upperworks were a drab brown with black-faced paddleboxes, except Queen which had white upperworks and paddleboxes. She had enclosed 'alleyways' around her saloon with large oblong windows which could be lifted up in fine weather. This gave second-class passengers greater comfort than her predecessors with their uncovered and open alleyways. The practice was continued in Princess Mary and subsequently in the later Princess Elizabeth.

Another oddity was Princess Royal of 1906. She was something altogether different and was more of an enlarged edition of Stirling Castle. Presumably intended for excursion work, she had a short open foredeck, a sizeable forecabin extending to the ship's sides and an aft saloon similar. This ship was pleasant to look at but unfortunately, did not come up to expectations and the Company refused delivery of her. She was later sold by her builders to Cosens & Co and became Emperor of India, of Weymouth. The new owners built her up forward and she had quite a lengthy career in their service and was engaged in both wars.

Electric lighting.....

At this time electric lights were installed only in Balmoral and Queen, oil lamps having to suffice in the others. Lorna Doone had them in 1928.

I have shown that, taken as a whole, they were an odd assortment and the Victorian ideas continued up to 1927 when the Company took delivery of Princess Elizabeth, the last to have a regal name. She was really a replica of Princess Mary and as such, showed no advancement on pre-war ideas. Her colouring was 'passage'-style in so far as she had a (short) buff funnel and black-faced paddleboxes, but her upperworks were white, like those of Queen. She was a dual-purpose ship, primarily 'passage', but useful on the shorter excursions.

.....and paddlewheels

The Princess Elizabeth had small wheels, with steel floats and was faster than the older vessels. In 1928, when Queen had her new wheels, the two ships were equal in speed and could interchange duties, such as 'Round the Island' cruises. In view of Queen having her wheels changed it would seem surprising that Lorna Doone, one of the principal units operating on long excursions, should retain her original wheels with wooden floats all through her career. Balmoral, the very fast and 'crack' boat running across channel always had steel floats on large wheels. Bournemouth Queen, built later on somewhat similar lines, but smaller and of much less speed (and coal consumption) had small wheels and steel floats.

Personal experiences

Now for some personal experiences. The first steamer to meet my gaze in 1907 was, appropriately, Balmoral. I saw her at West Pier, Brighton, on a Sunday excursion from Southampton, Southsea and Shanklin. Between 1907 and 1914 I saw her many times at Brighton and sometimes Lorna Doone, as her deputy. The next ship of the Company I saw was in 1912 when, after travelling to Bournemouth in Campbell's Brighton Queen I saw, at the Pier, Princess Helena with a dirty red funnel, operating on the Swanage service. Beside the Campbell magnificence she made an unfavourable impression. On this trip I also saw Solent, on the Lymington run and as she was a Southampton-registered vessel and owned by the L.S.W. Railway Co., I suppose she and her consort Lymington and later, Freshwater of Southern Railway, should come within my present scope. These three were small paddlers, able to take the Lymington River, but had no bow-rudders or bridges. A wheelhouse sufficed for navigating in all three.

In 1915 I made my first voyage aboard a Southampton ship when I crossed from Portsmouth to Ryde in Solent Queen. Now in the Royal Navy for the duration of the war I forgot all about these things until after hostilities had ceased.

'19 onwards

In January 1919 my ship was homeward bound from Pembroke Dock to Chatham when I espied Her Majesty and Princess Beatrice, as paddle patrol vessels or minesweepers, at Milford Haven. In the same month I arrived at Sheerness and saw a variety of paddlers in their minesweeper guise, one of which was Lorna Doone, which I identified at once. In May 1919, a civilian one more, I took up residence in Portsmouth and set about exploring the paddle amenities of local waters.

Solent Queen was again the first to carry me, this time between Portsmouth and Southampton on which run she had re-opened the excursion sailing for the 1919 season. I remember she had several copper ventilators and for many years they were highly polished. She was unique in this respect, but later on economy measures were imposed and the beauty was obliterated by paint. At Southampton I discovered a small paddler, Hampton, on the Hythe Ferry service and made a trip in her. Next, I made a 'passage' journey from Southampton to Cowes, Ryde, Southsea and Portsmouth Harbour in Prince of Wales and as the season progressed I got in as many of these short trips as possible and became well acquainted with the three that were left to carry on - Solent Queen, Prince of Wales and Princess Helena. The other ships gradually came back and in 1920 I travelled in Lorna Doone and Bournemouth Queen. The 1921 season saw the return of Balmoral and Queen and in July I sailed to Cherbourg in the Balmoral. The next year Balmoral got a beating coming out of Cherbourg and arrived home late, with many of her square windows smashed. It was a puzzle to me that she was allowed to go across Channel on such an exposed crossing with square windows. In 1925, returning home from Cherbourg on a nasty day I saw two waterspouts, the only time I have ever seen them. The second was not very far from us.

About 1925 Solent Queen, generally on the Swanage run, came to be regarded as an excursion boat and boasted two all-white funnels and white paddle boxes. In the late 1920s Duchess of York was distinctive in having her name taken for a building liner. She was renamed Duchess of Cornwall and was also unique in having been sold to the Admiralty for 1914-18 war service and re-purchased by the Company afterwards. In the second world war she was sunk at Southampton, but was salvaged. Her final role was as relief to Lord Elgin.

The 1930s

In 1931 all the fleet were given white funnels with black tops, the first real unification of the Company and it was in this year the Company departed from customary practice and strangely enough, had built the Medina for 'passage' work only. Medina was a motor vessel, screw propelled, very small and slow, and introduced a new nomenclature to the fleet. The following year Princess Beatrice went for scrap.

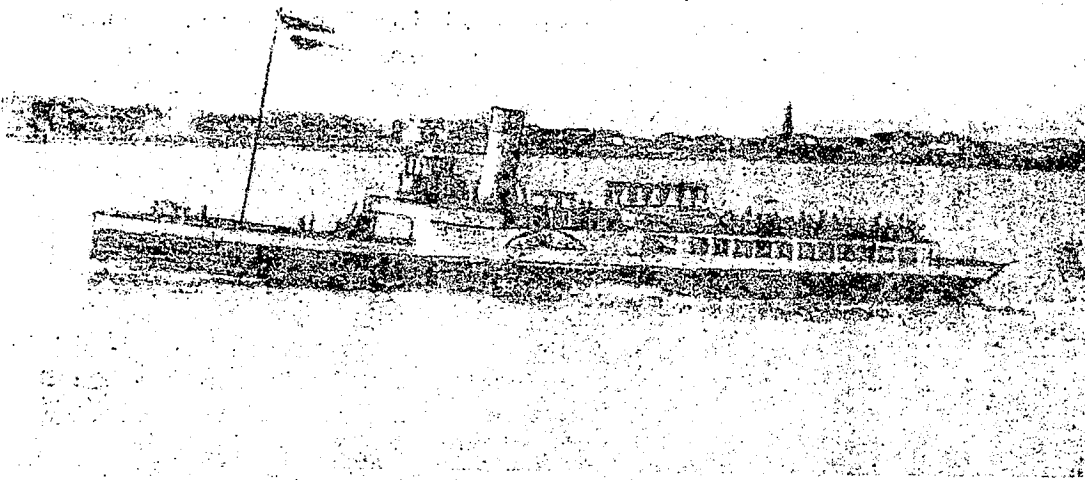
Yet a return to steam and paddle was made in 1936 in the form of an excursion-cum-'passage' paddler named - most inappropriately I would say - Gracie Fields. It was good to have a new paddler and with a bow-rudder she showed the old 'uns how to get out of Cowes quickly. She was, to me, however, the most ugly paddler I knew and was another Southampton oddity as she had a raised foc's'tle, well deck and full-width after saloon - used as a Dining Saloon like the proper excursion steamers. She was coal-fired and had a cowl on her large, oval funnel. She had a deck strake across her paddleboxes - very unsightly. In her second year a small wheelhouse was fitted to her hitherto open bridge and this led to a similar fitment to Princess Elizabeth and, in 1939, to Balmoral. Gracie Fields conformed to the now general practice of having electric navigation lights. At this time Princess Elizabeth now had her funnel lengthened and a cowl fitted, which greatly improved her appearance.

In 1938 Queen departed for the breakers yard. During her career she had the distinction of having had three names, one of which was no less than Mauretania which she held for the Cunard Company, pending their new liner to bear the name. When the time came for the name to be handed back, she (Queen) became Corfe Castle. Queen ended her days, with the third name, on the Swanage service, having taken over when Solent Queen found that service too much. Princess Elizabeth superseded her at Swanage for the 1939 season.

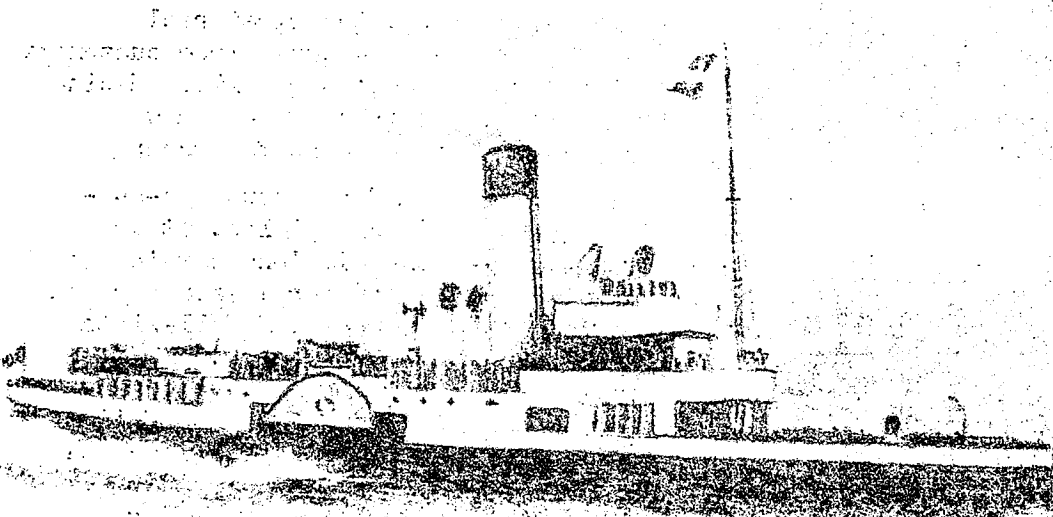
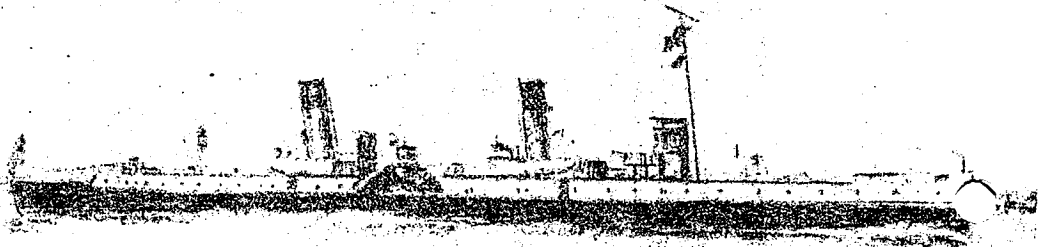
Gracie Fields, at this time, had taken over most of the secondary excursion work from Southampton and Southsea from Princess Elizabeth.

Also in 1938 a step which surprised a lot of Red Funnel followers was the building of Vectra, appropriately named and a fine ship. This vessel indicated the Company would build no more paddlers as she was motor-propelled, although not by screws. She had Voith-Schneider propellers, which enabled her to turn in her own length and manoeuvre easily. Certainly a big step forward, the ship was capable of any service undertaken by Red Funnel, except cross-Channel work. After Dunkirk she worked in the Southampton-Cowes service until 1944 when, owing to the difficulty of obtaining replacements for her German propellers, she was converted to diesel-electric twin screw drive, resuming service in January 1946.

CONSUL 1896

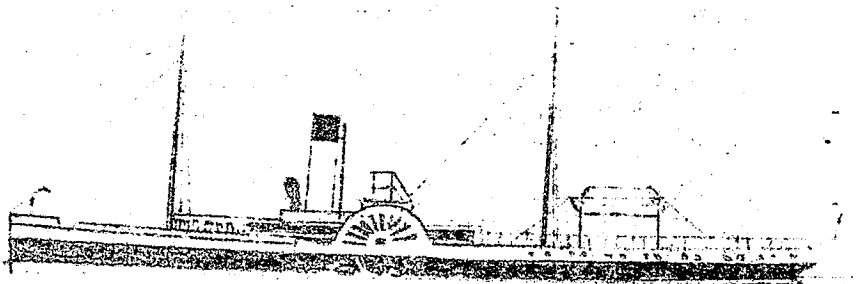


LORNA DOONE 1916

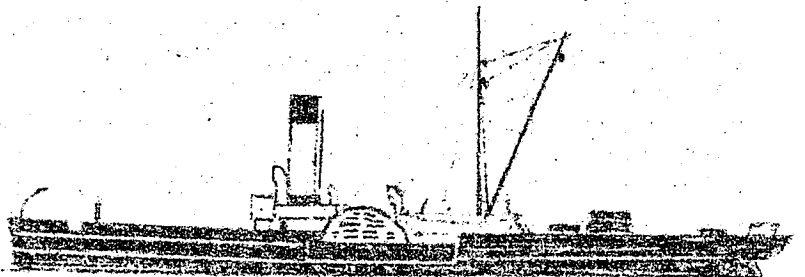


MONARCH 1924

LORD ELGIN as built



and after 1910



DRAWINGS BY ERIC LAW

War again

Gracie Fields had a very short career, for she became a victim of the Dunkirk evacuation in 1940. The war services of the steamers are well known and I need not include them in this article. Those left behind to carry on the Cowes service during hostilities were Duchess of Cornwall, Solent Queen, Princess Helena, Medina and Vecta which were fitted with degaussing bands (although I cannot remember seeing Vecta with one) and wheelhouses with covers to stave off machine gun bullets. Her Majesty was on the cargo-car service. It was about 1937 she was converted for this work and was used as a tender to C.G.T.'s Normandie. She was bombed and sunk in 1942 but later raised for scrap.

Postwar years

Now we come to 1945 and the return of Princess Elizabeth which was reconditioned in time for the 1946 season. She had been converted to oil-burning and was smart and useful on excursion work, pending return of the larger units. At this time also, Solent Queen, Duchess of Cornwall and Princess Helena lost their war-time make-up but retained their wheelhouses with flat tops. Apparently in anticipation of prolonged service and increased car-carrying, Solent Queen had her mast moved to the upper deck, ensuring a clear fore-deck for cars. 'Helena' lost her mast altogether and carried her masthead light on top of the wheelhouse, but Duchess of Cornwall was not altered. All three now had electric navigation lights and did the passage and tender work in conjunction with Vecta and Medina. Bournemouth Queen next returned and was reconditioned in time for the 1947 season, but ideas of modernisation ran riot and she was given too much top-hamper and a large pear-shaped funnel. She looked very smart, but was too low in the water. After a few seasons at Bournemouth and later at Southampton/Southsea, her No.3 Certificate was withdrawn and she was confined to inside the island. Balmoral and Lorna Doone were towed from the Clyde in very bad condition and laid-up at Northam pending their ultimate fate. This was early in 1947, but after a prolonged stay it was decided they were too far gone for further service. Feeling sad, I saw part of the demolition of both at Pollock Brown & Co's yard at Northam and noticed the 1914-18 war plate on Lorna Doone still intact.

Second-hand tonnage

As the fleet had become depleted, second-hand tonnage was sought and an ex-Birkenhead ferry boat, Upton, appeared at Southampton, sporting an immense red funnel. She ran for a time between Southampton and Ryde, making two-three trips a day, but there was some difficulty with stokers as she was coal-fired. Next there came the little twin-screw Robina in 1948, but she was unsuitable for the increasing car carrying business, having passenger capacity only. Both these ships were laid up at Northam, Upton later going to Pollock Brown for scrapping and Robina being sold foreign in 1952 to Italy.

Surprise purchases

Now for the big surprises in early 1949. First was the purchase of two big ex-mine-sweepers from the New Medway Steam Packet Company. They were Queen of Kent and Queen of Thanet of Rochester, which became Lorna Doone and Solent Queen, respectively. The former ran from Bournemouth and the latter from Southampton and Southsea, but as enthusiasts expected, were not a success. In 1951 Solent Queen had a disastrous fire while on a slipway and went to Dover for scrap. Lorna Doone followed her shortly after. These two ships were the last paddlers purchased by the Company.

The other surprise was the statement that the Balmoral was to be rebuilt, which was interpreted to mean the real Balmoral - the paddler known and loved by so many was to be revived again. Instead, however, an order was given for a new Balmoral - a general purpose motorship.

Last of the paddlers

The old paddlers were now nearing the end of their days and the Victorian regime was giving way to modern trends. Passenger carrying and excursion work was on the wane while car-ferrying was on the increase. All this and the changing habits of the times rendered the paddlers inadequate. One by one they went, the little 'Helena' being the last of the old 'passage' fleet to go. Bournemouth Queen subsequently went the way of the rest, except that she was broken up abroad, leaving only the 'Lizzie' as the sole, surviving paddler at Southampton. She was retained as a spare ship for the

Cowes run, although laid up for most of the winter months, until the modern, but ugly Carisbrooke Castle came into service. It is pleasing to record that 'Lizzie' was sold for further pleasure excursion work and survives as Princess Elizabeth of Southampton, still with a red funnel.

Although paddle steamers have gone entirely from the Southampton fleet, it is pleasing to say an odd one occasionally comes up the water on some special mission or for repair work. There are still two at nearby Portsmouth which come around now and again and our own 'Lizzie' visits one of the yards at Northam for attention. The Consul of Weymouth is still a likely visitor and we have Bristol Queen and Cardiff Queen which might visit us for some special function. The Admiralty paddle tugs from Portsmouth can occasionally be seen such as when they helped to drydock the aircraft carrier HMS Hermes at Southampton in 1959. I must not forget Embassy, the last paddle survivor on the Bournemouth station, which gets as far as Cowes during the yachting week. Virtually she is within the Southampton area and in sight of her old ground between Portsmouth and Ryde on which route she faithfully served as the Duchess of Norfolk of Portsmouth.

It is time now to salute the grand old ships that have gone, cherish the few that remain and value our many happy memories of an almost by-gone era.

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The LORD ELGIN

This iron paddler and a sistership, Lord Mar, were completed in 1876 by Richardson, Duck & Co., Stockton for J.Kidd who, with M.Galloway and A.Watson, were forerunners of the Galloway Saloon

Steam Packet Company, of 1886.

They were 'fast and magnificent saloon steamships', with a raised quarter deck, a bridge placed over the paddleboxes and funnel forward of the paddles. They were unusual in having compound diagonal machinery, with cylinders of 22 inches and 42 inches in diameter and a stroke of 42 inches. After only two years the Lord Mar was sold to Brazilian owners and in 1881 the Lord Elgin was bought by the Bournemouth, Poole and Swanage Steam Packet Company for £5,000, making her first voyage to Swanage for her new owners on 21 May 1881. Based at Bournemouth, she worked in conjunction with Cosens' paddlers and was colourful with black hull, red funnel, white upperworks and two masts. In those days her speed was 13 knots and her certificate was for 355 passengers. In 1892 she was reboilered and then, in January 1909 she became a unit of the Southampton, Isle of Wight & S.E. RMSP Company when they absorbed the Bournemouth concern. At that time the fashion was for the elimination of mainmasts on excursion steamers, and her mainmast was duly removed.

She continued to work from Bournemouth but was being outclassed by more modern ships and in 1910 was converted to a flush-deck cargo ship. Her foremast was removed and an upright mainmast was stepped abaft the paddles, equipped with a 3-ton derrick. Deckhouses were removed and her dining saloon became a hold. Her funnel was made buff until 1935 when it became red again. So she paddled from the Town Quay at Southampton to Cowes, five days each way each week, throughout the wars, with the general cargo needed for an island community and went on to become the oldest cargo paddler in the world.

By the 1950s her speed wad down to 8 knots, although she managed extra summer sailings on Saturdays for motor cars, but she was withdrawn in 1952 and laid up at Chapel Wharf, on the River Itchen, her place being taken by the converted LCT, Norris Castle. Each year she appeared as a relief ship whilst other vessels were being overhauled but, after her relief voyages of 1955 she was sold for scrapping, moving to Pollock, Brown & So's yard at Northam on 13 May 1955, a very old ship.

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(Note: Sketches by Eric Law of the paddlers Bournemouth Queen, Balmoral, Lorna Doone, Her Majesty and Solent Queen appeared in Black Jack No.18 - 1st series, Spring 1976).

ATLANTIC CONTAINER LINE LTD

by W.H.Mitchell

The Atlantic Container Line is a consortium of several companies. It began in 1965 when Holland Amerika Line formed a transatlantic shipping consortium for the carriage of containers with three Swedish owners - Wallenius, Transatlantic Rederi and Swedish America Line. These companies were constituents of the Atlantic Container Line, registered in Bermuda in May 1966. Four ships were ordered for the new service which was between Gothenburg, Bremerhaven, Rotterdam and Antwerp to New York, Baltimore and Hampton Roads ports. The ships, also designed for ro-ro traffic through stern doors, were similar but not identical in basic design for certain modifications were made to suit the demands of the various companies.

Almost immediately, two other companies - the Cunard SS Co Ltd and Cie Generale Transatlantique joined the consortium, and a further six, second generation ships were ordered for delivery mid-1969 onwards. Cunard and CGT contributed two vessels each, with one each from Wallenius and Holland-Amerika. New ports of call included Le Havre, Southampton, Liverpool and Glasgow and Elizabeth N.J. and Portsmouth Va.

The whole of Cunard's trade in the Boston, New York, Hampton Roads range of ports was then carried in ACL ships. All ships are fixed on a 12-years charter basis to ACL.

First generation ships

	gt	Built		Owner
Atlantic Span	11,955	Rheinstahl Nordseewerke GmbH	8.1967	Red Transatlantic
Atlantic Saga	12,232	Oresundsvarvet, Landskrona	9.1967	Swedish Amerika Line
Atlantic Song	11,772	France-Gironde, Dunkirk	9,1967	Wallenius, Sweden
Atlantic Star	11,839	France-Girdone, Dunkirk	11.1967	Holland Amerika

Measurements: 647 ft oa 600 ft bp 86 ft breadth. Machinery: Oil. 20 1/2 knots. Cargo: 15755 tdw Containers: 525 x 20' (including trailer deck). Cars: 1,150.

Second generation ships

The second series of six ships were steam turbine driven. The first due, the Atlantic Crown had an unfortunate engine room mishap and so the first ship delivered was the Atlantic Causeway. It was, indeed, this ship that opened the service from Southampton on 4 December 1969, inaugurating a weekly service of 'The Motofway to the U.S.A.', as the quayside banner said.

Atlantic Causeway	14,916	Swan, Hunter Sb. Newc.	11.1969	Cunard SS Co.
Atlantic Crown	15,439	A & C de Dunkirk	12.1969	Holland Amerika
Atlantic Champagne	15,351	Ch de l'Atlantique	1969	C.G.T.
Atlantic inderella	14,946	A & C de Dunkirk	2.1970	Wallenius (W.German flag. 1975: (Swedish flag).
Atlantic Conveyor	15,469	Swan, Hunter Sb. Newc.	3.1970	Cunard SS Co.
Atlantic Cogniac	14,946	Ch Nav le Giotat	5.1970	C.G.T.

Measurements: 696 ft oa 643 ft bp 92 ft breadth. Machinery: Steam turbine. Cargo: 18500 tdw Containers: 854 x 20' (including trailer deck). Trailers: 110

*** Note: A joint container service had been started in 1968 with the conventional Cunard ships Alaunia and Andania (London-Southampton-New York) and CGT's Suffren and Rochambeau (Havre-Southampton-New York) pending the building of the container ships.

Jumboising

With continuing growth in trade, the Atlantic Container Line announced in February 1975 that the four First Generation ships were to be lengthened between October 1975 - November 1976, the Atlantic Saga going to her builders in Sweden, the Atlantic Span to Germany and the other two to Japan. The additional midbody took the length of the ships from 197.04m to 223m and in order to improve stability, 83m-long sponsons were fitted to both sides of the hull at waterline level amidships.

Canadian service

In 1978 a new Canadian service was introduced, from North European ports and Southampton to Halifax and Montreal. Four ships were placed in this service, two chartered from Stena Container Line Ltd (a Cunard subsidiary), one from Wallenius and one from Swedish American Line. The Swedish ships were each lengthened 80 feet.

Atlantic Premier	11,077	Wartsila AB. Finland	3.1972	(ex Mont Royal '78) Swedish America
Atlantic Prelude	11,077	Wartsila AB. Finland	1972	(ex Montmorency '78) Wallenius

Measurement: 162.36m length Machinery: Oil engine

Atlantic Prosper	5,466	Hyundai SB & HI, Ulsan	1978
Atlantic Project	5,466	Hyundai SB & HI, Ulsan, Korea	1978

Measurements: 151.01m 21.67m breadth. Machinery: Oil engine.

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The SCYTHIA

The cover drawing is of the Scythia, name ship of a group of similar Cunard ships laid down in 1921 for the Liverpool-New York service, the other ships being Samaria, Franconia, Laconia and Carinthia. She was built by Vickers, Barrow but was sent to Lorient for fitting out, owing to an industrial dispute. On 20 August 1921 she made her maiden voyage to New York from Liverpool.

On 27 August 1939 she was requisitioned as a troopship and went to the Clyde for conversion. Whilst at Algiers on 23 November 1942 she was damaged by aerial torpedo and it took ten months of repairs at Gibraltar and New York before she re-entered service.

The Scythia was released from Government service in 1948 and was then used for a year in a repatriation service from Cuxhaven to Quebec and Halifax. Then she was sent to John Brown's yard at Clydebank and given a general overhaul for the Canadian service. She came to Southampton in 1951, her first voyage taking place on 10 April to Quebec. At the end of 1957 she was used for a time in a Rotterdam-Quebec run for the Canadian Government but finally she left Southampton on 1 January 1958 for breaking up at Inverkeithing.

Her measurements were 624 ft length, 73 feet breadth giving a gross tonnage of 19,730 when built. Her passenger carrying facilities on the Canadian service were for 248 First and 630 Tourist class. She was propelled by geared turbines to twin screw giving 16 knots.

Scythians were a nomadic people inhabiting the Steppes of Russia and later, India in the 9th-3rd century BC.

Drawing by Eric Law.

Recent publicity in the local press and on television has probably made all those members who were not already aware, that you can collect fine portraits of Southampton ships on postage stamps. This publicity referred to a rather gimmicky item called a Souvenir Sheet (a stamp set in an enlarged sheet of paper which illustrates the theme but has no real genuine postage purpose) which showed a fine profile portrait of the Q.E.2. and was issued to mark the first visit of that ship to Tristan da Cunha.

In fact this only represents the latest in a long line of stamps issued over the last one hundred years which show vessels which have used the port. The earliest, I think, is that issued by the then independent postal authority of New Brunswick showing the paddle steamer "Washington" of the Ocean Steam Navigation Co of the United States which first arrived here on June 15th 1847 and served the port for the next ten years. This stamp was issued in 1860. Since then many countries have issued stamps showing Southampton ships including the "Great Eastern", "St Paul", "Mauretania", "Aquitania", "Ile de France", "Queen Mary", "Normandie" and there are four stamps showing the QE2. It is equally possible to follow the history of the great shipping companies, both British and foreign, from their origins to the present days. For example there are several stamps showing the first departure of a P&O vessel from this port, The "Hindostan" on September 24th 1842 and continue via the "Peninsular" of 1881 (a PO error in fact was shown on the G.B. UPU issue of 1974 which depicted the "Peninsular" with a Southampton Packet postmark when in fact the company sailed from London in 1874) to the "Canberra" via the "Chusan", "Iberia" and "Himalaya" of recent fame.

In fact collecting of actual stamps is just one side of the hobby and most people extend their interest into "covers" connected with the subject. This philatelic term "cover" refers to envelopes and wrappers used via the P.O. over the years. In fact you can subdivide this into two, the gimmicky items issued to get money out of philatelists like myself (eg;- First Voyage of the QE2 with stamp and special postmark) and those genuinely used by people who had no other interest than sending letters for business or personal reasons. For example a few years ago I bought for a couple of pounds a "cover" addressed to London posted in Calcutta on April 21st 1855 and marked by the sender, "Per P&O Steamer 'Bonbay' via Southampton". This sent me delving into shipping histories, writing letters and pouring through local newspapers published in Southampton at the time. Six months later I was able to piece together a fascinating story which included two ships, a camel train and the names of the Captain and passengers via Madras, Galle, Aden, Sucoz, Alexandria, Malta and Gibraltar. All this from one "cover", which perhaps helps explain some of the fascination of this subject for me. There are many sidelines and all types of vessels - I've in fact started my own collection with Clausentum! Have your family lived in Southampton for several generations? Look through those old letters and mementoes, you never know what you'll find!

This article has appeared now in the hope of getting those members who are able to attend meetings to come along in September and bring any items of maritime interest that you have in your possession (and I know that a large number of you have!)...postcards, menus, publicity brochures, crockery and cutlery (we won't ask how you got these!)..etc..etc. I shall be giving an introductory slide talk on ships on stamps and if some of you could put your items on slides you could join me. But I hope that there will be many items to put on display and that all the members can see the "treasures" that you have acquired over the years. The success of this meeting really does depend on YOU.

POUNDS SHIPBREAKERS
OF
PORTSMOUTH
by D BATEMAN

To anyone approaching Portsmouth along the M275 Pounds Yards cannot be missed, this is due to the huge jumble of scrap on land, ranging from mooring buoys to long defunct military vehicles, and a line of rotting hulks littering the foreshore. There is a yard on either side of the motorway, the West yard adjacent to Tipner Rifle Range, is used for laying-up berths, and the East yard, near Alexandra Park is the breaking-up yard.

In spite of the title of shipbreakers, very few vessels purchased actually get broken up. They arrive unannounced and after a period at either of the yards or his moorings off Whale Island and in Fareham Creek, depart unannounced to destinations unknown.

Vessels such as ss POMPEY LIGHT (1328/49), HMS VALESAY, the PAS tug CANNON (purchased 3/72), mv SELBY (1477/36) purchased 3/73, SWBC 1 (ex LCT (3)...) purchased 8/74, TCG HOPPER No3, No5, and No6 (751/50-ss-last two), the LCT (8)s BASTION and PORTCULLIS (arrived mid '72), FGN KROKODIL (ex USN LSM 537) purchased 6/76, the Dutch Pilot Cutters ALGOL and ALDEBARAN, the Dutch minesweepers BEEMSTER, BORCULO, BORNE and BREILLE, an ex PAS tug TAMAC and Danish landing craft ULLER and BRAKE all fall into this category.

Some vessels do get reported, however, for instance, mv PANAGIA (2588/54) was purchased from the Admiralty Marshall and shortly after in 12/73 was sold to Somali flag interests as AGIA IRENE. Two ex FN vessels, DUFTON and MINER III spent only a short time at the West yard before going to Sittingbourne for breaking up in 6/77. After a number of years on the foreshore at the East yard KEMERTON was towed to Poole for breaking-up in 1973, PUNCHESTON after a stay from 12/72 to mid 76 was broken up at Dartford in 10/77 and FISKERTON after a similar stay preceded her sister to Dartford three months earlier. The ex Danish landing craft TYR (ex USN LCU 1230) after a short stay in the West yard in 1970 moved to the Camber Dock, at some time being painted all over in a delicate shade of blue but retaining its RDN pennant number. She was sold to Plesseys for sonar trials before leaving for service elsewhere.

Other vessels that were moved to the Camber were ALGOL which spent some time there in 1977 after periods at Fareham Creek and West yard. The Longest stay at the Camber was the FGN EIDECHSE (ex USN LSM 491) which was partially transformed into the mercantile HODISH before being towed away. A number of vessels have probably been broken up in recent years in the East yard after several years beached there. Those are HMS DINGLEY (arrived 1968; broken up 1977) HMS LEVERTON (5/72: BU after 9/76) HMS DALSWINTON (4/73: BU76) HMS FLORISTAN (68: ?) TID 32 (1966: BU by 75) C708 (ex VIC : BU by 75). Exceptions to this are an unidentified hovercraft broken up in 1977 and two converted minesweepers B J ISLANDER and V A ISLANDER which arrived in 4/78 and demolition was completed by 8/78. These were ex-American vessels converted to standby safety vessels.

Ships still intact at the time of writing (11/78) are the former British Rail mv ISLE OF ELY (866/58), WEATHER SURVEYOR (ex-HMS RUSHEN CASTLE), two unidentified trawlers, the ex-RN lifting craft LC 9, LC 10 moored at buoys off Tipner Range and the submarines TIPTOE and ARTEMIS at a mooring near the West yard.

At the East yard, all in advanced states of decay and partially demolished, are an unidentified LCM(7), two minesweepers believed to be BROADLEY and BISHAM, (If correct these are two of the three minesweepers damaged in the Haslar Creek fire of 1956, scrapped in 1959 according to Jane's. Certainly both show signs of fire damage), HMS BASSINGHAM, HMS RACKHAM, TID 99, TID 50, two unidentifiable tug hulls, the remains of HM submarine P556 (ex-USN S29) several steel and

After the recent lack of reefer ships in the port, many have discharged cargoes of either bananas or oranges during the last quarter, several making their debut in the port. The largest newcomer arrived on her maiden voyage; she was Winter Water, the first of a class of six 14800 dwt reefer ships which are being built at the Oresund shipyard at Landskrona, Sweden. Launched on 9 June 1978 for Salen Red. (who incidentally own about one third of the world's total reefer capacity) she is one of the largest and fastest reefers in the world to date. Another impressive looking vessel to discharge fruit in the Western Docks arrived on Easter Sunday; she was Lauritzen's Asian Reefer (8890g 1978). One week prior to Asian Reefer's arrival an ex-Lauritzen vessel the Indian Ocean (6010g 1969) (ex Nippon Reefer '78) also discharged fruit in the Western Docks. One of six sister ships all built during 1969 she now flies the Greek flag. On 21 March the Japanese reefer Asama Maru (8371g 1978) arrived. She is very similar in design to the 'M' class Fyffes vessels and actually arrived wearing Fyffes' colours. Other reefers to call over the last quarter have included the Liberian owned Lethe (4700g 1962) a one time regular caller as Fabre's Espadon until her change of name in 1977, and two identical vessels Clydefirth (4128g 1964) (ex Vikfrio '74, ex Thorsoy '72) and Para (4172g 1964) (ex Vikfrost '77, ex Thorsdrott '72) owned by Transfruit Shipping of Panama and Mowinckels of Norway respectively. Two further reefer have arrived, but both were under tow. Firstly on 10 March came the Liberian Tropical Sun (4623g 1968) (ex Brunshausen '78) being towed by the very impressive looking Bugsier tug Caribic (995g 1978). After discharge she was towed out, bound for Rotterdam for repairs, by the even larger Bugsier tug Titan (1599g 1974). On 11 April the second tug and tow arrived; this pairing consisted of the twin-funnelled tug Svitzer Garm (746g 1978) and the Greek Cretan Reefer (6929g 1962) (ex Apollonian Light '79, ex Ballade '72) and at the time of writing she is still undergoing repairs at berth 22-3.

On 5 March two local tugs towed in the Greek freighter Dynamikos which had developed engine trouble off the Nab Tower. Built in 1953 and with a gross tonnage of 8501 she will be best remembered as Hansa's Froienfels before her sale to her present owners in 1972. Also in for repairs was the Pakistan National Shipping Corp's Karotua (8301g 1958) (ex Weybridge '67 ex Rossetti '64 ex Weybridge '64). She is one of a group of unique design vessels completed for Watts, Watts.

After sailing from Middlesbrough the Liberian engines-aft cargo vessel Rio Explorer (4619g 1976) discovered she was short of water and made a brief evening call on berth 41 on 26 April.

An interesting movement took place on 27 March when two DFDS vessels arrived. First the elegant looking passenger/car ferry England (8117g 1964) arrived on berth 106 with 600 troops on board; then the troops walked up to 201 berth, where the ro-ro cargo vessel Dana Hafnia (5991g 1976) was berthed, to drive off a large quantity of army vehicles which were bound for Aldershot after an exercise in Norway. Both the vessels normally operate on the DFDS UK-Denmark service.

Two further vessels have called with plywood and containers from the Far East; first on 25 March was the Japanese-built Oinoussian Courage (20512g 1972) (ex Rhein Maru '76). She flew the Liberian flag and was followed in and in fact beaten in turn-round time by the Greek bulk-carrier Falcon (13889g 1978) which arrived on 4 April. This latter vessel is a Japanese 'Freedom' type. On 3 May the Bangladesh SD14 Banglar Baani (9346g 1976) arrived at 35-6 berth. She was built by Austin & Pickersgill for Metcalfe as the Industria being purchased by her present owners late in 1976.