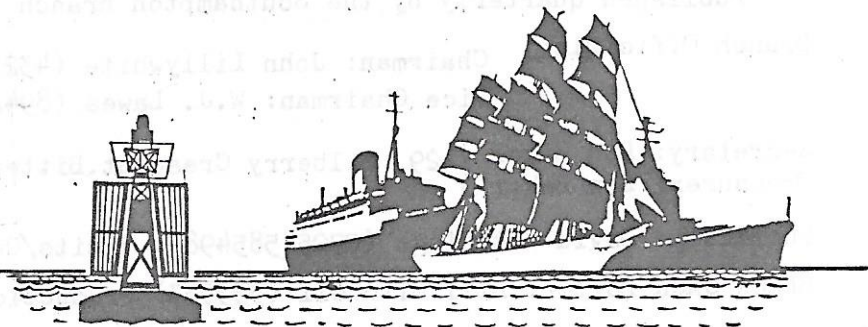


BLACK JACK

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY

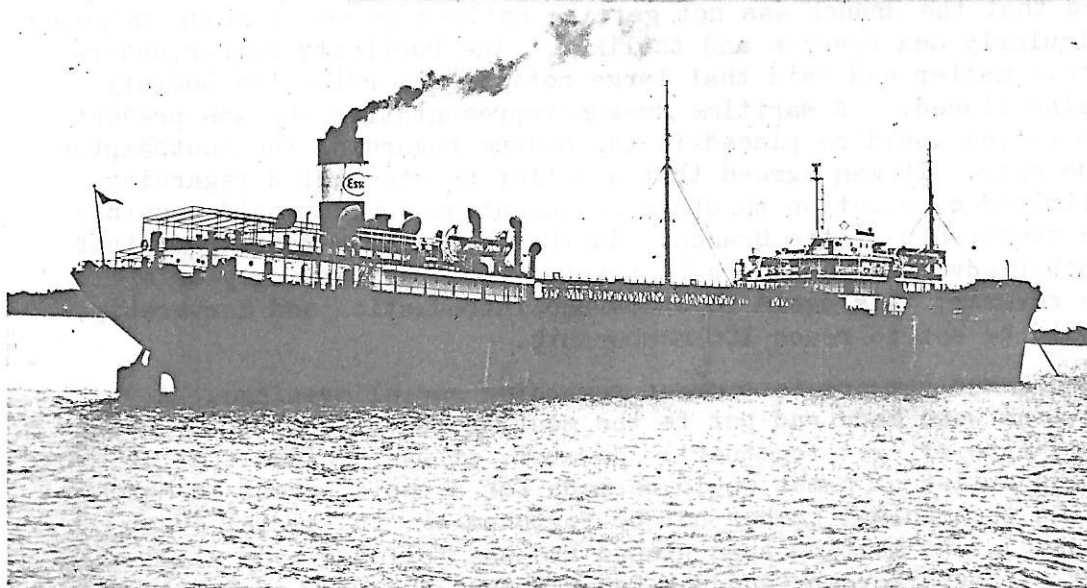
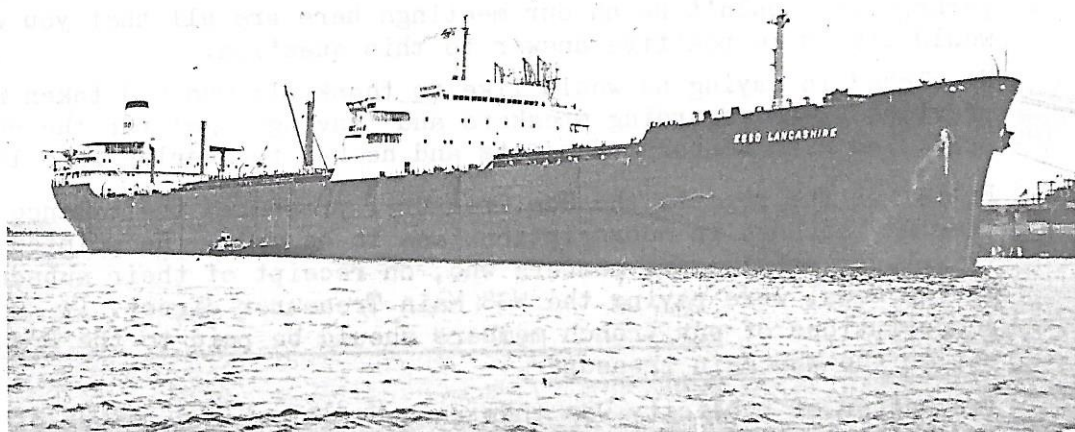


WINTER 1987

No. 65

The 'County'-class tanker Esso Lancashire berthed at Fawley Marine Terminal.

There were four in the class, each 48,000 gt plus two 'improved' type of 53,000 gt



The 'Ess' name prefix started to become a familiar sight on tankers just after war ended, all the Anglo-American Oil Company ships being renamed after towns and places prominent in Esso products.

In 1951 the Esso refinery came 'on stream' at Fawley and from then on more and more, ever-larger, tankers could be seen in Southampton water, eventually culminating in the Very Large and Ultra Large crude carriers of the 1960s-1970s.

Coasters were always to be seen, distributing products to the Esso terminals around Britain's coastline.

The 1930-built Esso Southamton, 11,787 gt is shown above, anchored off Fawley. Constructed by the Federal Shipbuilding & Drydock Company at Kearny, N.J. she came to the British flag and name in 1950, working until February 1958 when she was broken up at Split. She was driven by steam turbines and had a deadweight capacity of 20,600 tons. (see page 3)

Published quarterly by the Southampton Branch of the World Ship Society

Branch Officials: Chairman: John Lillywhite (432181) 1, Thornleigh Rd.
Vice Chairman: W.J. Lawes (894234)

Secretary: Rod Baker) 29, Milberry Crescent, Bitterne, Southampton (449972).
Treasurer: Don Baker)

Publicity: David Hutchings (0705 585498) Visits/Outing: David Hornsby (449972)

BLACK JACK Editor: Bill Mitchell (559953) Production/projectionist Mike Lindsay (694558)

...

The 37th AGM. The Secretary stated that membership of the Branch stood at 63 full members and 7 associated (family) members, a small increase on last year. The new slide show, which has taken so much preparation, is on the road and he hoped that it would be well received by other branches. In this connection he said that everyone would help the branch greatly in endeavouring to get the show booked by other organisations, which, he was sure, would be of interest to many local groups.

He said that one matter he had already commented on in Black Jack was the question of social activities. We are one of the largest branches in the U.K., make a distinguished contribution to maritime publishing and yet, as those of you who read Branch Notes of Marine News will know, have very little life outside of our Branch meetings. This is a matter of concern to the Committee but perhaps it shouldn't be as our meetings here are all that you want. However, we would like some positive answer to this question.

He closed in saying he would like to thank all who had taken note of his previous pleas regarding speakers and 'having a go' for the ensuing programme is sprinkled with members' subjects and he had to overlap into 1989.

Following the report, the Hon. Treasurer presented the Balance Sheet and stated that no increase in subscriptions was to be made. He pointed out however, that there were still a few members who, on receipt of their subscription reminder in Marine News, were paying the WSS Main Treasurer direct. It should be noted that subscriptions of our Branch members should be paid to the Branch Treasurer and not to the WSS Main treasurer.

The matter of publicity was then raised following a number of complaints that had been received that the Branch was not getting notices in the various shipping magazines, particularly Sea Breezes and the like. The Publicity member undertook to rectify this matter and said that large notices regarding the Society were also now being placed. A Maritime Museum representative who was present also said that a notice would be placed in the Museum regarding the Southampton Branch tape/slide show. It was agreed that a letter be stencilled regarding the show for a limited circulation to other organisations which would possibly help to increase membership of the Branch. Another suggestion was agreed that a form of membership/advertisement card be printed with the ensuing year's programme on the reverse; this again to encourage introduction and membership, a drive which could be set to reach 100 membership.

The Secretary then asked members to comment regarding social evenings. A number of suggestions were made and put to the meeting, but the majority still voted for the same type of 'get together'. However, it was decided that at the January meeting a list of names would be made for a social event in March or April and should the minimum number not be forthcoming, the social event would not take place. The meeting then closed and was followed by a slide show of the wanderings of David Hornsby and Rod Baker around the Port of Rotterdam.

A MERRY XMAS AND
A
HAPPY NEW YEAR

...

A letter has recently been received from WSS member Mr A.C. Pavey. Mr Pavey was one of our members at the start of our Branch in 1950. He now lives in retirement at Locks Heath but

has been unable to get to our meetings for some time. He has asked to be remembered to all members of the Branch and this we have much pleasure in doing.

(Tuesdays)

THE 1988 PROGRAMME

12 January An evening with Andrew Hogg TANKERS and EASTERN BLOCK CARGOES	9 February The Eastern Mediterranean Scene David Oldham ^{by}
8 March "OCEANS JOINED" A WSS tape/slide show	12 April 'VOYAGES FRANCAISE' with Frank Phillips
10 May 1944-1954 A decade in the MERCHANT NAVY by Captain Moffat	14 June SOUTH COAST STEAMER SERVICES 1939 by Gerald Jacobs
12 July Richard de Kerbrecht on SHAW SAVILL	9 August Members 'do what you will evening.
13 September David Hornsby's STANDARD SHIPS (PART II)	8 November PORT OF HOBART WSS tape/slide show
11 October 38th AGM followed by a BOOK SALE-OF MERCHANT SHIPS	13 December Photographic competition for 1988

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BOOK REVIEW

Tankers are not everybody's 'cup of tea' but they have a profound effect on the modern economy of the World and indeed, without their cargoes of 'liquid gold', many modern materials would be unavailable.

The oil industry is barely 100 years old - the growth has been phenomenal from small wells and transport in barrels and as case oil in sailing ships to the first tentative bulk shipments and on to the sophisticated tankers we know today.

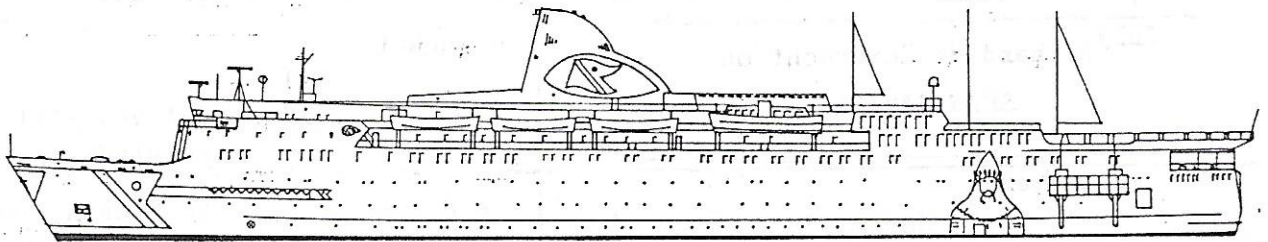
All this has been brought out in Bill Mitchell and Len Sawyer's latest offering from Terence Dalton FROM SAILING SHIP TO SUPERTANKER, available at £16.95. Basically, the history of British Esso and its predecessors, it, nevertheless mirrors the story of the oil industry. Illustrated with a fine and wide selection of photographs not exclusively of ships (many are archival gems such as the 'Ethyl' girls and the one of the chap smoking a cigarette next to a Pratts petrol pump!) it details the growth of Esso's importing, refining and distribution network and chronicles the ships themselves with much insight into design and careers. Also included are the oft-neglected coastal and bunkering vessels and tugs.

Nigel Robinson, another Branch member, has painted the dust jacket illustration of Esso Caledonia against the backdrop of a refinery at sunset.

NR

 The BLACK PRINCE

One of two sister motorships built by Lubecker Flender-Werke AG Lubeck in 1966 for joint ownership by Fred Olsen & Co and Det Bergenske D/S. Both Black Prince and Black Watch, 9,500 gt have measurements of 141.6m x 20.3m and oil engines to give 22 knots. The hull has side and stern doors for ro-ro facility. They were built for occasional work; from October/April they were employed in the Tilbury/Canary Islands run as Black Watch and Black Prince; from May/September their names were changed from Venus to Jupiter respectively in the Newcastle/Oslo North Sea service. The London/Canary Islands cruises began on 29 September 1966 and five days in the Canary Islands, sleeping on board ship, was advertised.



At the end of 1986 the Black Prince was re-designed and re-built for cruising to the Canary Islands which began in February 1987 from Southampton which became her base. (see Black Jack No.63, Summer 1987).

...

Two former twin-screw motorships Black Prince and Black Watch were built by A/S Akers Mek Verks, Oslo in 1938, 5,040 gt and measurements of 386ft x 53 ft. They were greatly involved in the war....

The Black Watch was seized by the German Navy in 1940 and used as a submarine depot ship. The Black Prince was seized by Germany in April 1940 and renamed Lofjord. On 21 December 1941 she was badly damaged and burnt out in an air attack on Gdynia. Later salvaged, she was sold to S.Herløfsen & Co., Oslo, and arrived at Antwerp on 21 May 1947 for conversion to a car-carrier. However, she was found to be beyond repair and was sold for breaking up at Burgh, where she arrived on 16 November 1951.

One of the last actions in the war in Europe took place on 4 May 1945 when the escort carriers Searcher, Queen and Trumpeter, cruisers Norfolk and Diadem and seven destroyers, Carysfort, Opportune, Savage, Scourge, Zambesi, Obedient and Orwell were despatched as a task force in 'Operation Judgement'. This was to raid the base at Kilbotn (near Narvik), and to attack German shipping west of Narvik. Planes from three carriers were involved in the sinking of U.711 in position 68.48N 16.38E, whilst ships sank the German submarine depot ship Black Watch and a trawler.

On 6 May the cruisers Birmingham and Dido, with four 'Z'-class destroyers and covered by the task force of escort carriers Searcher and Trumpeter, cruiser Norfolk and five destroyers, sailed to begin the temporary occupation of the Northern area ports. They reached Copenhagen on 9 May, where the German cruisers Prinz Eugen and Nürnberg were surrendered.

The Olsen ships can be traced back to the mid-1800s when three brothers - all of Captain rank - began acquiring sailing ships and by 1886, when Frederik Olsen took over two of his father's ships, the Olsens had owned some forty vessels.

In 1896 the first steamer, Bayard, was ordered for a Fredrikstad/Garston service; in 1898 the Bonheur began a Norway/London service and in 1899 larger offices were acquired in Christiania (Oslo). The Ganger Rolf Shipping Company, trading between Norway and Rouen were in financial trouble in 1900 and asked Olsen to take over the company. This he did and there then came a succession of such requests. In 1901 the Faerdes Co's service to Grangemouth; the East Norway Lloyd's lines to Newcastle and Antwerp; in 1912 the Norden Shipping Co, and when Newcastle was substituted for Grangemouth, a North Sea network existed.

By 1914 he had 44 ships, some then trading in the Norwegian South America Line in which he placed the Brazil - Norway's first motorship. In 1916 Fred Olsen & Company came into being.

Twenty-three ships were lost in the 1914-18 war, but in 1921 fifteen ships, operating in the Mediterranean and Canary Islands trades were acquired from the Otto Thoresen Line. (This was a predecessor of Otto Thoresen who, in 1964 was to form Otto Shipping Co A/S for the Thoresen Car Ferry service from Southampton to France).

In 1929 the Olsen company entered the tanker business and in 1930 the fast fruit trade. Southampton saw the first Olsen fruit ship in January 1935 when the Banaderos brought a cargo of fruit from Palestine and continued to maintain this link up to February 1939.

Actually, one Olsen ship, Betancuria (2,698 gt) from the Canary Islands to London became a casualty on 25 June 1938 when she was in collision in the Channel with the Italian ship Santagata, 4,299 gt (1905) owned by A.Lauro. She was holed on the starboard side amidships and was taken in tow by the Red Funnel tugs Hector and Vulcan to Southampton. However, owing to her list she could not be drydocked that night and berthed at No.25, water being pumped out all night long by a Risdon Beazley salvage tug. The Betancuria then went into drydock for temporary repairs, discharged her cargo ofbananas at 101 berth and was then towed by two Dutch tugs to Rotterdam.

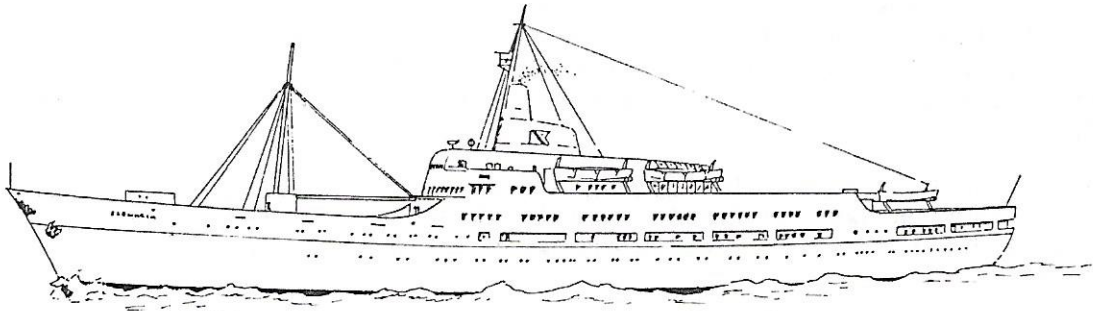
When war began the fleet numbered 58 shkps of 185,000 tdw and 28 of these, some 100,000 tdw, were lost in the five-year conflict. In the rebuilding of the fleet fast ships with refrigerated, air-conditioned and electrically ventilated holds for perishable foods were constructed for Pacific, South American, Mediterranean and Canary Islands services and by the mid-1960s, over sixty ships were owned, spread over twelve operating companies.

During the war an Olsen ship, the 832 gt Akershus (1914) was based at Southampton from August 1944 to June 1945 as an Admiralty salvage vessel.

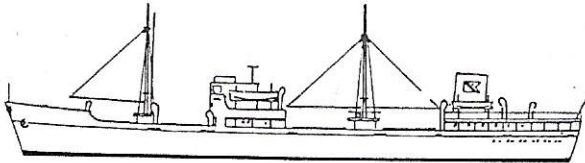
In 1948 a new fruit service was begun between M rocco, Dieppe and Southampton, the ships using the Empress Dock and in 1951 thê Nordenfjeldske Shipping Co's lines, which worked between London, Antwerp and the Mediterranean, were taken over, later to be re-styled Nor-Med Lines Ltd. The first ship at Southampton was the Braga on 21 January 1948 with oranges from Haifa and a number of these fruit ships were seen - Balblom, Bolette, Braque, Bruno until about 1951 when there came a lull in the trade. This picked up again in 1957 and in the 1958-59 season thirty-five calls were made and in 1961 there were fifty-eight. There ships used 26-27 berths where a new fruit transit shed had been built in 1961. But by then experimental loads of oranges in containers were being made.

Another link with Southampton was the building of two hulls at J.I.Thorncroft's Woolston shipyard. The two ships were actually ordered from Akers Mek Verk, in which Olsen's held the controlling interest, but as their order book were then full,

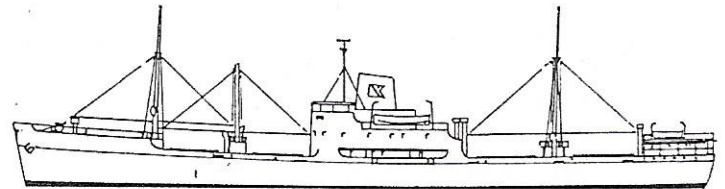
sub-let the buildings to Thornycrofts. Yard 4112 was launched as Blenheim, Yard 4145 as Braemar and both were towed to Oslo for machinery and fitting out. The Blenheim was towed by the Dutch tug Ganges. They were completed at Oslo as passenger ships for 237 passengers in three classes and measured 373' 9" oa length x 53' breadth. They were for the North Sea service between Oslo and Newcastle and had a speed of 16 knots.



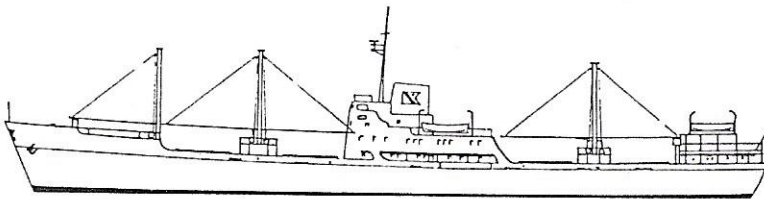
BLENHEIM of 1951



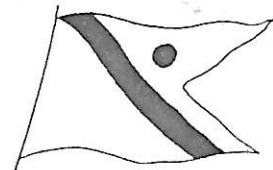
BALBLOM of 1948



BENGAZI of 1947



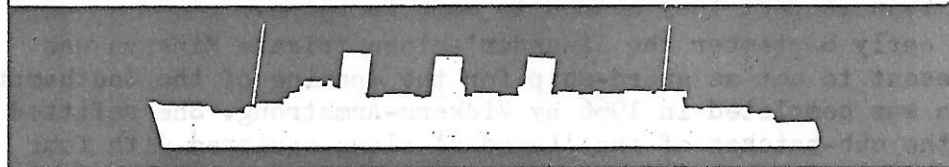
BRUNO of 1948



On 21 May 1968 the Blenheim caught on fire halfway across the North Sea, from North Shields to Oslo. The fire was near the bridge and all radio contact was cut. A Danish fishing boat reported the casualty at 8.30 am on 21st and three helicopters were sent from North Jutland. The 89 passengers and 78 crew took to the boats. Two RAF Shackleton planes arrived, as did two German salvage tugs, Pacific and Heros, as well as the service ship Smit-Lloyd 3 which fought the blaze. Fine weather helped, and the sittership Braemar picked up the passengers and crew. The Blenheim was later towed to Kristiansand S, with nearly all superstructure burnt out. The cause of the fire was found to be an electrical fault in the fuse box near the Dining Room. After examination it was decided that the ship would not be repaired. However, she was then sold to A/S Uglands, Grimstad who had her converted to a car carrier and, as such, she called at Southampton under her new name Cilaos. (See Black Jack No 61, p.10.).

drawings by Nigel V Robinson

old southampton callers



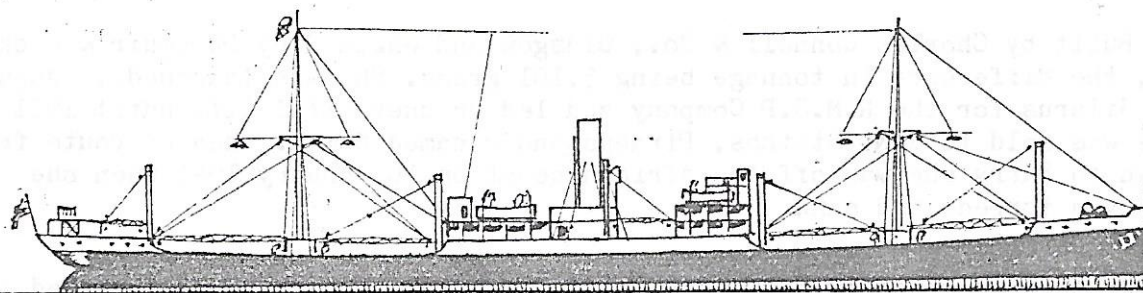
Cargo ships of the
R.M.S.P Company and
Royal Mail Lines

(Part III) The 'S' ships


by John S. Lindsay

The 'S' ships were all laid down in 1919 and were of standard 'B'-type design. They were acquired by the R.M.S.P Company in 1920. During their careers most of them made calls at Southampton to load or discharge general cargoes. Their terminal port was London, but calls were also frequently made to the South Wales ports of Newport, Cardiff and Swansea and also to Liverpool. Although they were classed as sisterships their profiles differed slightly in the bridge, deckhouse and funnel arrangements. There were also slight variations in the tonnages. I will take the Sambre as the pattern and give a short history of the others.

SAMBRE was laid down in 1919 as War Swift(II) as the yard of Short Bros., Sunderland. She was launched on 29 August and completed in November. When acquired by the R.M.S.P Company in 1920 she was renamed Sambre. Dimensions were 400 ft x 52.5 ft x 28.6 ft; draught 25.3 ft and tonnages 5,260 gross and 8,100 dwt. The single screw was driven by a three cylinder triple expansion engine developing 517 NHP. Steam was supplied by three single-ended boilers, with two flues, producing a steam pressure of 180 lbs PSI for a service speed of 10 knots. Both machinery and boilers were built by G.Clark of Sunderland. The hull was of the three island type, with counter stern and straight stem. The fo'c's'tle was 40 ft in length, the bridge deck 110 ft and the poop 49 ft; five holds were served by lattice-work derricks, number three hold aft of the bridge was generally used for bunkers but there were two small bunker hatches port and starboard of the funnel. There was also a small hatch on the poop for stores etc. Bunker capacity for coal was 393 tons and carrying capacity was 443,000 cu.ft of grain or 402,000 cu.ft of bales. There was a crew of 45; Captain, four mates, chief and four engineers, wireless operator, shipwright and boatswain. There was a chief steward and the rest were seamen, firemen, trimmers and greasers and mess stewards for the deck and engineer officers. The Sambre had an uneventful but stable trading life between North and South American ports and the United Kingdom. One of the cargoes carried frequently was raw hides from the Argentine to London and when the hatches were unbattened for unloading the smell which pervaded the ship for weeks after was obnoxious. Her end came on 27 July 1940 when, en route from Manchester to Philadelphia she was torpedoed and sank in the mid-Atlantic.



SABOR (note Arc Lamps on masts for NIGHT WORKING)

R.M.L. 

SABOR was built and engined by Earle & Company, Hull. She was launched on 24 January 1920 as War Whale (II) and completed on 19th April, later being renamed Sabor when acquired by Royal Mail. In 1943 she was in the Indian Ocean en route from Mombasa to Rio de Janeiro when she was torpedoed and sank.

SEGURA Built by Richardson, Duck & Co., Stockton-on-Tees and engined and boilered by Blair & Co., Stockton, the Segura differed only in tonnage, which was 5,295 gross. Completed in February 1919 as War Pansy (II) she became Segura when bought by the R.M.S.P Company. In 1921 she ran aground but was refloated and repaired to continue her career. In 1925 she was acquired by Houlder Brothers and renamed Langton Grange,

NAVAL NOTES
BY
Bill Lawes.

Yet another quiet quarter for Naval movements but when they arrived in port they seemed to come in pairs.

In early September the 'Loander'-class frigate Minerva was present to act as guard-ship for the opening of the Southampton Boat Show. The Minerva was completed in 1966 by Vickers-Armstrong. She refitted in 1979 to become one of the sub-batches of the 'Leander'-class equipped with four Exocet surface-to-surface missiles. In port at the same time was the Dutch-flag Zeekakkel. This small, 384 tons (full load) vessel is now used for seamanship training at Den Helder. She was built by J & K Smit at Kinderrijk in 1951. She appears to have previously served as a Pilot ship and Survey vessel.

Later in September a pair of replenishment vessels visited Southampton. The U.S.S. Milwaukee was completed in November 1969 by General Dynamics at Quincy, Mass. With a full load displacement of 37,370 tons, her 32,000 shp steam turbines produce a speed of 20 knots. She is armed with Sea Sparrow surface-to-air missiles, Vulcan Phalanx close-in weapon system and can carry two helicopters. This ship is one of the 'Wichita'-class replenishment oilers that are designed to carry fuel, ammunition and provisions. The second replenishment ship was also from the other side of the Atlantic, the Canadian Preserver. She has a

Continued page 9

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OLD SOUTHAMPTON CALLERS continued:

later being sold to Embiricos Brothers of Greece and renamed Nicolaos Embiricos. Her end came in 1939 when she struck a mine and sank off East Goodwin Sands.

SOMME was built by Short Bros., Sunderland and engined by the North Eastern Marine Engineering Co.Ltd., also of Sunderland. Launched on 17 June 1919, the gross tonnage when completed was 5,265. The ship became Somme when acquired by the R.M.S.P. Company and her career was similar to that of the Sambre. Her end came on 16 February 1942 when she was torpedoed on a voyage from London to Bermuda.

SEVERN Details were as for the Somme, but tonnage was 5,246 gross. She was launched on 2 April 1919 as War Pelican and renamed by R.M.S.P in 1920. Sold in 1932, she became Leonidas II. In 1934 she ran aground at Ranzow, near Arkona in the Baltic Sea and although refloated and towed to Kiel, it was considered an uneconomical proposition to carry out the necessary repairs to put her back into service and she was sold to shipbreakers and broken up at Haulbowline, Cork in the August.

SILARUS Built by Charles Connell & Co., Glasgow and engined by Dunsmuir & Jackson Glasgow, the difference in tonnage being 5,101 gross. She was launched in August 1919 as Silarus for the R.M.S.P Company and led an uneventful life until 1931 when she was sold to G.N. Stathos, Piraeus and renamed Nemea. When en route from Cape Town to Barry she was off the African coast on 16 January 1941 when she was hit by a torpedo and sank.

SIRIS Built and engined by Harland & Wolff, Greenock, the ship was launched on 26 June 1919 and completed as Siris for the R.M.S.P Co in October. The tonnage difference was 5,242 gross. She worked in general cargo service until 12 June 1942 when she was attacked and torpedoed in mid-Atlantic on voyage from Hull to Rio de Janeiro. At first she failed to sink, but the U-boat surfaced and finished her off by gunfire.

SARTHE Built by Wm Gray & Company and engined by the Central Marine Engine Works, West Hartlepool, she was launched on 22 November 1919 as Sarthe for sale to the R.M.S.P Company who purchased her in 1920. She followed the same career as her sisterships until 8 October 1942 when she was sunk in Lat 34.50S Long 18.40E on a voyage from Aden to Rio de Janeiro.

A KING'S YACHT

In 1926 John I. Thornycroft & Company completed the steam yacht Kassed Kheir for King Fouad of Egypt. She was a paddle steamer of 237 ft 9 in overall length, a breadth of 32 ft and a draught of 3 ft 3 in. Built for service on the Nile, she was exactly the same build as two other Nile steamers which Thornycrofts had built earlier for Thomas Cook & Son's Nile service, the Egypt in 1906 and Arabia in 1910. However, she did have the Royal Coat of Arms on each paddle bo.

The Royal apartments were on the promenade deck. Right forward was a large observation room, fitted as a palm court with a decor scheme of green trellis on whiteground, ornamental pilasters and striped valance ceiling. Cane chairs, glass-topped oak tables, flower boxes and palms contributed to the luxury and passing scenery of the Nile.

The drawing-room was adjacent, furnished in late Louis XV style, with panelled walls moulded in walnut, carved pilasters, a floor of herringbone oak parquet with walnut border and a carved marble chimney piece, with iron fire grate, electric fire, gilt dogs and marble hearth and curb.

Louis XIV style was chosen for the Royal Dining Room, with moulded panels and fluted pilasters in mahogany. The ceiling (as in the drawing room) had a centre motif and enriched cornice. Mahogany furniture provided seating for fourteen persons.

On the port side of the forward deckhouse was the Prince's State cabin in Louis XVI style; the Princess's State cabin was adjacent on the starboard side and similarly furnished.

The King's suite of rooms was in the fore end of the after deckhouse on the port side, the Queen's on the starboard. Both were in late Louis XVI decor, with beautifully decorated ceilings, cornices and moulded panels painted in artistic shades. The floors were of oak and walnut parquetry. Ante-rooms had luxuriously upholstered easy chairs, settee, a secretaire and occasional table, all to suit the period of decoration.

These were the Regal suites of the promenade deck. The main deck housed a Dining Saloon forward, seating forty-six persons and aft were port and starboard cabins. The lower deck had more cabins and crew accommodation was situated forward.

The Kassed Kheir was driven by diagonal triple expansion engines which developed 500 ihp. The feathering paddle wheels were 10 ft 6 in in diameter with seven floats to each wheel; her speed was 9 1/2 knots.

Although built at Woolston, the ship was sent out in pieces and re-assembled at Cairo for she was too big for navigating the Nile below Cairo. She was still working in the 1960s, but as a tourist steamer, based at Luxor and running upstream to Aswan.

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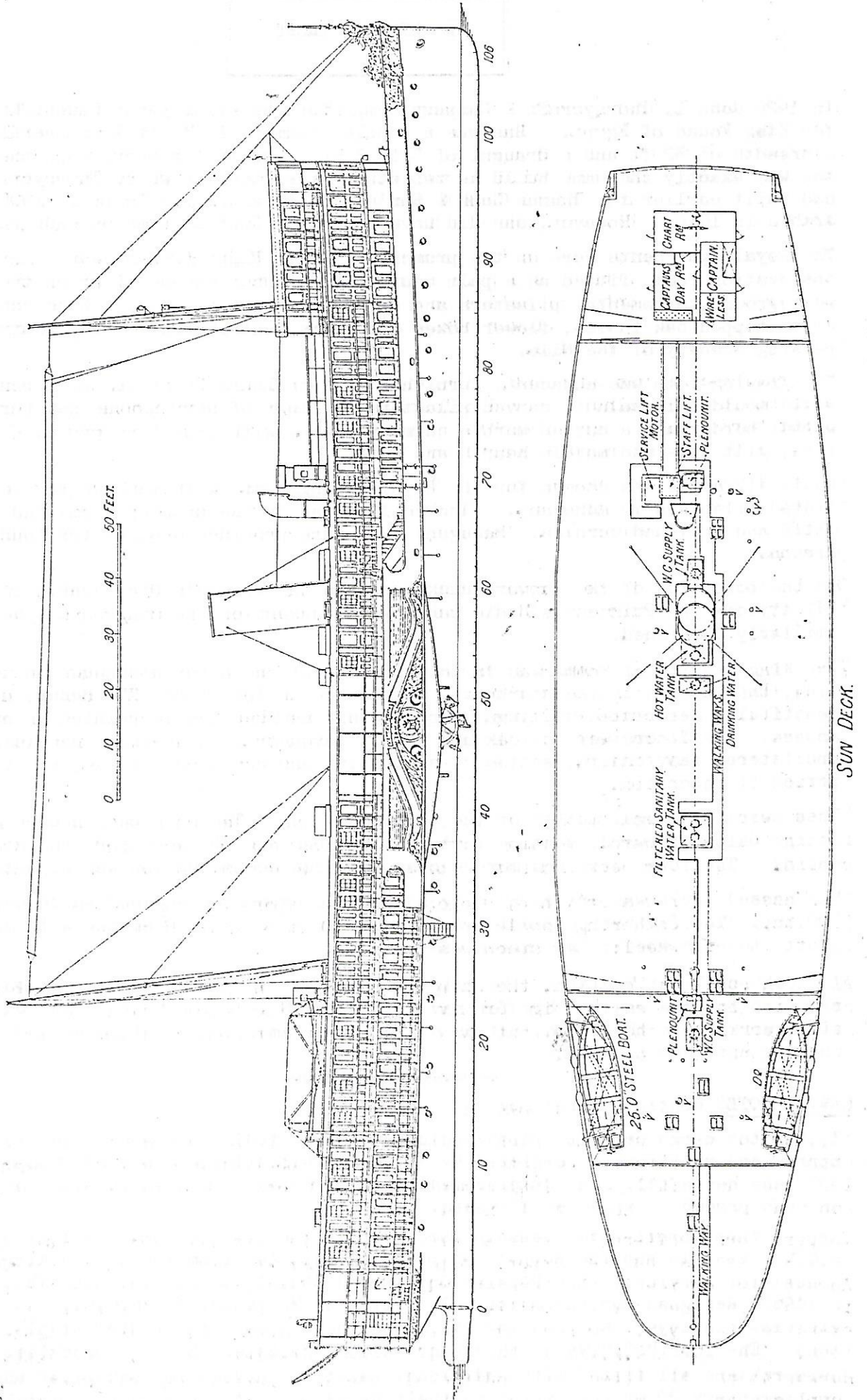
NAVAL NOTES continued from page 8

13,000 ton cargo capacity which includes various fuels, dry and frozen foods, spares and munitions. Completed by St. John Shipbuilding & Drydock Company in 1970 she has a full load displacement of 24,700 tons. Geared turbines of 21,000 shp can produce a speed of 21 knots.

Vosper Thornycroft-built vessels were much in the news recently as four of their M.C.M. vessels and the support ship Abdiel departed from the United Kingdom in August for service in the Persian Gulf. The Abdiel was completed by Thornycroft in 1967, designed for the multi-role duties of HQ vessel for M.C.M.Vs and exercise minelayer. Now nearing the end of her career, the Abdiel displaces 1,500 tons. The four M.C.M.Vs of the 'Hunt'-class, Bicester, Brecon, Brocklesby and Hurworth were all fitted with additional satellite navigation equipment and two supplementary 20 mm guns prior to their departure. All four were completed by Vosper Thornycroft between 1980 and 1986.

THE KING OF EGYPT'S NEW YACHT "KASSED KHEIR."

Built and Engined by John I. Thornycroft & Co. Ltd., Southampton.



BRINGING THE OLD GIRL HOME

Engineer Bill Targett helped to bring the Galway Bay, formerly Calshot back home to Southampton. This is his story.

I arrived home one day in October 1986 to be told by my son that Red Funnel wanted me to get in touch with them. I rang their Towing Office and spoke to the Assistant Towing Manager who told me that Southampton City Museums had bought the old tug/tender Calshot which had been sold by Red Funnel in 1964 to Holland America Line to tender their liners at Galway in Ireland. The Museums Department had been in touch to ask if any of their ex-engineers who had served on the Calshot when she was in Red Funnel's fleet of tugs and tenders would like to contact the Tudor House Museum. As I had spent some time on her when she was working in the port I rang, as requested.

I was put in touch with Nigel Overton, Keeper of the Maritime Museum, who was bringing the Galway Bay ex Calshot back to Southampton to be a feature of the City's Maritime Museum at the newly opened 'Ocean Village' in Southampton Docks. Nigel asked me if I would like to do the trip home from Galway to Southampton as Engineer. I agreed, and after all the formalities were completed I found myself flying out from Heathrow to Shannon two days later where I was met by Nigel Overton and Bob Thompson, another member of the Museum Department. We drove the fifty-odd miles to Galway Bay where the ship was berthed, arriving about 7.30 pm just as she was moving out of the Lock Pits at high water to the pier head so that she could leave at 5 am the next morning. When she was alongside I went on board to sign Articles for the trip home. I met the Chief Engineer and the Skipper for a few minutes as they were off ashore to say cheerio to folks and have a few farewell pints with their friends. So Nigel, Bob and I took the opportunity to down a couple of pints of the dark brew and have ourselves a meal.

It was about 11.30 pm when we got back on board, quite happy, and settled ourselves in the first class saloon, up forward, below the shelter deck. Mind you, the old horsehair seats were a bit hard, and the cast iron swivel chairs were bolted to the deck. She was still as she was built in the 1930s in respect of the hull and top and lower saloons, galley, wheelhouse, chart room, radio cabin etc. The crew accommodation had been slightly modified, but the engine room was a lot different since I had last been down there twenty-five years ago. The twin triple-expansion 800 horse power steam reciprocating engines, plus condenser air pump, feed pumps etc had gone and had been replaced by twin Bolnes 8 cylinder two-stroke diesel engines with 2 - 1 reduction gearboxes. Where before she had 1600 hp, it was now halved and the 10 ft propellers had been changed to some of smaller pitch; but she was still capable of doing 12 knots. The conversion had been very well done in Holland prior to her going to Ireland in 1966. There was a 35kw generator and a small compressor for filling the air bottles for starting the main engines. The general service, fire and bilge pumps were now electrically driven and the salt water and fresh water pumps to the main engine heat exchangers were direct drive from the main engines. The engine room was smart and clean and a credit to the Chief and Second Engineers. The Chief, Noel Richardson, had been in charge of her for the last twenty-four years and was sorry to see her going. The Second Engineer had been with her for the last five years. He was an ex-Submariner and had done nine years in the Royal Navy. We had quite a bit in common as I had done a bit of time in the 'Grey Funnel Line'. The Skipper was a great fellow as were the rest of the lads. I felt at home straightaway.

At 4.30 am I heard the main engines start up, so I jumped into my rompers and went down to the mess room to put the Kettle on for a brew of tea. The Chief and I stood drinking tea and yarning and I asked permission to go down to the engine room. He said OK and I went below where Christy was warming through and checking all last minute details, oil and water circulating, topping up air bottles, the load on the generator, in fact all the things an engineer should do before leaving the Quay wall. At 5 am the engine room telegraph rang Slow Astern Starboard engine; Stop; then Full Ahead Both and with a loud farewell blast on the whistle we were away heading for the mouth of Galway Bay which was a two-hour trip.

After everything had settled down we went up top for breakfast. Noel had already been cooking bacon, eggs and black pudding and made a big pot of tea. Nigel and Bob joined us as they had been on the bridge with the skipper as we left. After breakfast the Chief set 6-hour watches with him and the second. I have signed Articles as

¹² supernumary 2nd engineer and as the ship had not been handed over I was spare hand but I spent most of my time with the engineers going through the spare gear, checking the emergency generator which was air-cooled in the forward boiler room, making myself familiar with the bilge lines, fuel tanks etc in the forward boiler room. The oil-fired watertube boiler had been removed in the conversion but the oil tanks had been utilised for diesel fuel. The three old Scotch boilers had been stripped out, but the shell remained as well as the side pockets of the coal bunkers. The ash hoist was also still there. The steam gearing remained and was converted to electro-hydraulic using the same shaft and quadrant, but disconnecting the pistons and eccentrics and using the cylinder block to support the worm and pinion. It still had the old telemotor control from the wheel in the bridge very neatly done I would say. The original windlass on the foredeck was also converted from steam to electric and a new capstan put in aft. The towing hook had been cut off but was put on board to be re-fitted later. The steering telegraph for the emergency steering remained so, apart from the main engines, the old Calshot still had most of her old gear. At 7.30 am we passed the Aran Isle where the Galway Bay had run a daily service with passengers and freight until being withdrawn when the Irish Government decided that she was not modern enough. Then we were south, passing Kilkee and the Loop Heads and across the mouth of the Shannon River into those long, lazy Atlantic rollers which made the old girl roll "like a pig in a barrel". "You legs like a crab", one of the A.Bs said. Fiddles were fitted to the galley stoves and a Pot Mess was on the menu - everything in one pot - meat and vegetables simmering away, wet clothes on the table tops to stop the plates sliding off and watching you didn't finish up with it in your lap.

The wind was freshening and we were following the coastline down to the Blasket Docks, threading our way through because it was daylight. There is a passage through although it is not buoyed, but our Skipper knew the channel like the back of his hand. At night you have to pass outside, putting another two hours on the journey. We carried on, still rolling for although she was about 700 tons, with the removal of the boiler, bunkers and heavy main engines etc, the tug/tender was now only drawing 11 ft 6 in instead of 14 ft 6 in of her original draught. We carried on down to Dingle and across Dingle Bay heading for three strange rocks, known locally as Bull, Cow and Calf, known by these names because from a certain angle there is a strong likeness to a Bull elephant, Cow elephant and a small rock like a Calf close behind holding her tail. Very effective. The west coast of Ireland is very rocky and mountainous. We passed the Skellings Rocks with its lighthouse and helicopter pad. At one time I was told they were inhabited by monks. About a mile out from the Kerry coast we saw a couple of coasters and a few trawlers, then continued across the mouth of the Kenmare River, heading towards Bantry Bay, and then south-easterly towards the infamous Fastnet Rock. We had slight rain and westerly winds and continued to 'roll on', passing the Fastnet at 21.30 and into the Western Approaches, which brought back memories of when I was "Deep Sea". We had roughly 16 hours passage to the Longships and with a freshening westerly we knew she would cut a few capers...and she did, sticking her head in and the bow wave thumping under the rubbing band. We managed to get some sleep despite sliding up and down the settees. Next morning we were in the Channel and things got easier. The swells had gone down with the sea "up our behind". We settled down to another 24 hours of Channel passage. All took a hand at cooking. Midday we had "Galway Bay special"... boiled bacon, cabbage, spuds boiled in their jackets...and for tea cold bacon and pickles. In fact, we all mucked in and had a great time. We arrived at the Needles Pilot at 5 am on Friday morning. Our pilot was not due to board until 8 am, so the Skipper gave us a little run down to St Catherines Point, just off the Isle of Wight, to kill time. At 8 am sharp we picked up the pilot, then moved through the Single Bank at Hurst Castle and on to Hook Buoy. By this time I had 'proved' myself and was allowed to take the engine controls up to Fawley as the Chief and Second were interested in the station tugs and tankers we passed. The Towing Superintendent and said before I left that they would try and put on a show for me and sure enough they did. The Clausentum slipped her buoy and with fire monitors going, escorted us to Netley Castle; then the Totland joined and with Hamtun and Sir Bevois made up a four-tug escort to the Town Quay. Needless to say, I got a lot of ribbing from my old shipmates in Red Funnel and when they asked Paddy if he needed a tug to put him alongside his reply was 'blue' to say the least. So here we were, back in the place where the Old Girl had started from. We were alongside and rung off..(finished with engines) about 11 am. Main engines were shut down and the TV, Press and 'Heads of State' etc came on board. The Irish tricolour was lowered and the old 'Red Duster' hoisted. Date, 10 October 1986.

This article is produced with the kind permission of Netley Marsh Presevation Club magazine. Further details and drawing of Calshot were in Black Jack No 59, Summer 1986.

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nautical notebook

THE EVERCHANGING SCENE

Harland & Wolff Ltd

During the last month or so the ever-changing face of Southampton Docks featured the dismantling of the Harland & Wolff plant in the East Docks estate.

Harland & Wolff Ltd were, at one time, the largest ship repairing and engineering works on the South Coast. Their plant was opened in the (Old) Docks in 1907; was extended in 1918, and again in 1920. The works covered an area of 400,000 sq.ft, the main workshops being adjacent to the Trafalgar (No.6) Graving Dock and in close proximity to the huge Floating Dock. Facilities were provided for the heaviest class of hull repairs, for auxiliary machinery and for furnishing, decoration and refrigeration etc.

This world-famous company was founded at Queen's Island, Belfast in 1853 and Branch establishments were later sited at Glasgow, Greenock, London, Liverpool and Southampton, ranking it as one of the largest organisations of its kind in the world. During the 1939-45 war Harland & Wolff shipyards built both naval and merchant ships in large numbers and a great proportion of repair and conversion work, the number of vessels being taken in hand for repair during hostilities at all establishments totalled no less than 22,271. Nine of the eleven plants suffered extensive air attacks and considerable damage was done to the works at London, Liverpool and Southampton.

Under emergency conditions the employees of the company and its wholly-owned subsidiaries totalled over 51,000 - nearly double that of the peacetime workforce.

The Extension works were near No 1 gate backing on to Canute Road and long-since gone and the Main works, inside and to the right of No 4 gate are but a memory.

A news item of September 1928 perhaps helps to complete the story.....

Winter overhauls and repair prospects are looking very promising for in addition to the customary lay-ups and overhauls, Canadian Pacific and Red Star Lines will also have work done on their liners. All the large Atlantic liners will be drydocked during their lay-ups and Aquitania and Berengaria will each spend 28 days in the Floating Dock. The Majestic will lay up from 15 February to 10 April. The three Canadian Pacific ships to be overhauled are Empress of Australia, Empress of France and Empress of Scotland. Red Star's Belgenland, Pennland and Lapland will also be making their appearance. Drydocking dates are: Empress of France (Oct 3rd), Empress of Australia (Oct 15th), Belgenland (Nov 23rd), Mauretania (Dec 6th), Arabic (Dec 17th), Aquitania (Dec 19th), Homeric (Dec 28th), Empress of Scotland (Jan 3rd), Lapland (Jan 7th), Olympic (Jan 18th), Berengaria (Jan 19th), Pennland (Jan 28th) and Majestic (Mar 7th).

Norddeutscher Lloyd announce that in 1929 their home-ward bound steamers on the Europe/US service will call at Southampton instead of Plymouth. The two new liners Europa and Bremen will make their maiden voyages in April and then the 32,000-ton Columbus will be taken off service and re-engined. It will be recalled that one of the main engines of Columbus was wrecked and she has been running with an engine of smaller horsepower in its place. Both the reciprocating engines of the Columbus will be taken out and high pressure steam turbines installed in their place.

END OF THE TANTALUS

Many will recall the Ocean SS Co's OBO carrier Tantalus which was the last ship to berth alongside the Ocean Terminal. She sailed on 3 July 1984 for Brest after a 2-year lay-up at Southampton, being sold to Marine Management A/S, Oslo, renamed Tantra and placed under the Cypriot flag. Towards the end of 1986 she moved to Kappa Maritime Ltd., London, was renamed Antarctica and in the November was stationed off Larak Island as a storage ship. She was attacked and set on fire but although this was extinguished she was so damaged that she was sold to shipbreakers in China.

ELLERBEK The small passenger vessel Ellerbek caused some curiosity when she arrived at the Town Quay (berth 67) in mid-summer. Not in Lloyds Register she was eventually discovered listed in Germanischer Lloyd of 1960. She was constructed by F. Schichau AG, Elbing in 1927, has a length of 32.48m, a beam of 5.51m which gives 129 gt. She was built for Willy Zenner, Kiel but most probably has had name changes over the years. Prior to her arrival at Southampton her registry was at Flensburg. She is privately owned and is at present being refitted.

ALBATROS The cruising ship Albatros (6,268 gt) will call at Southampton in a cruising schedule on 18 May 1988. Built by Swan, Hunter & Wigham Richardson Ltd., Wallsend in 1953, the twin screw, turbine-driven vessel has had a varied career. Built for Bergenske Dampsk. of Bergen she started as a North Sea ferry, working from the Tyne to Bergen, with occasional calls at Stavanger. She was launched as Leda in September 1952 by Princess Astrid of Norway and began service in April 1953 with accommodation for 112 first and 382 tourist-class passengers. She had a speed of 22 knots and could cross to Bergen in 19 hours. Withdrawn in September 1974, it was some time before she was sold to become Najla in 1981, owned by the Livestock Transport & Trading Company, Kuwait but after only a short time she was laid up at Chalkis. The next move was to Parana where she was fitted out as a passenger ship and renamed Albatros early in 1984 for her new owners, Anro Marine Enterprises, Piraeus. For a time she took the name Allegro but in 1985 reverted to Albatros. In 1986 she came under Dolphin (Hellas) Shipping S.A. of Piraeus and like so many Greek cruising ships, arrived at Piraeus in October 1986 for the winter lay-up until the 1987 cruising season began.

SAMNEVA A reader has recently enquired as to what happened to the Liberty ship Samneva which was torpedoed in the Channel during the war.

The Samneva was one of the 2,700 plus 'Liberty'-type ships built in the United States during 1941-1945. Launched by the California Shipbuilding Corporation, Terminal Island, Los Angeles as the Henry M. Stanley, she was chosen for lend/lease operation in Britain and, in accordance with nomenclature, was renamed Samneva. On bareboat charter from the United States War Shipping Administration, the Ministry of War Transport placed her under the management of Alfred Holt & Co. Ltd (Blue Funnel Line).

At 21.00 hours on 24 July 1944 the Samneva, working in the Normandy supply train, was a victim of the German schnorkel submarine U.309 (Ltd Hans-Gert Mahrholz) from which three LUTs (torpedoes with pre-set gyro-angle and a zig-zagging course) were fired. Detonations were heard by the submarine after 5 mins 35 seconds and 8 minutes 40 seconds as the Samneva was hit.

Seriously damaged, the ship was towed from position 50.14N 00.47W, approximately 30 miles south-east of St Catherines Point, to Southampton, then beached at Netley where she broke in two. The stern part was later salvaged and in June 1948 was towed to Briton Ferry for demolition. The bow part remained on Netley Beach and was scrapped in situ.

The Samneva had triple expansion engines, was 422 ft 8 inches long and 57 ft breadth. Gross tonnage was 7,219.

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On 16 February 1945 U.309 was in the Moray Firth area attempting to attack ships of Convoy WN 74 (Loch Ewe/Methil) when she was found by the Canadian 9th Escort Group on sea patrol and was sunk by the frigate HMCS St John.

SPANISH CARGOES The Spanish flag is being seen more and more often in the Docks. Two interesting small ships were the Kanin and Calabria which came in to 47 berth (grain silos) for loading within a week of one another a few weeks ago.

Both belonged to Naviera Peninsular S.A of Bilbao. The Calabria (3,537 gt) was an engines-aft cargo ship, 6,628 tdw, built by Soc. Met Duro Felguera Gijon in 1977 and what is perhaps unusual is that she had twin screws. The Kanin, the other vessel, had just joined the fleet.