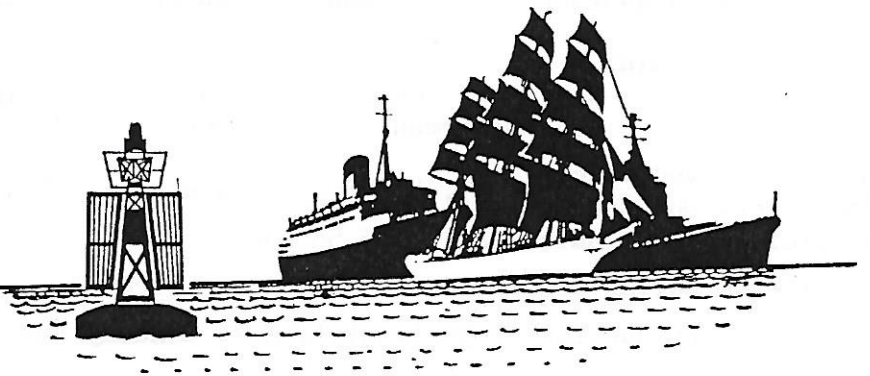


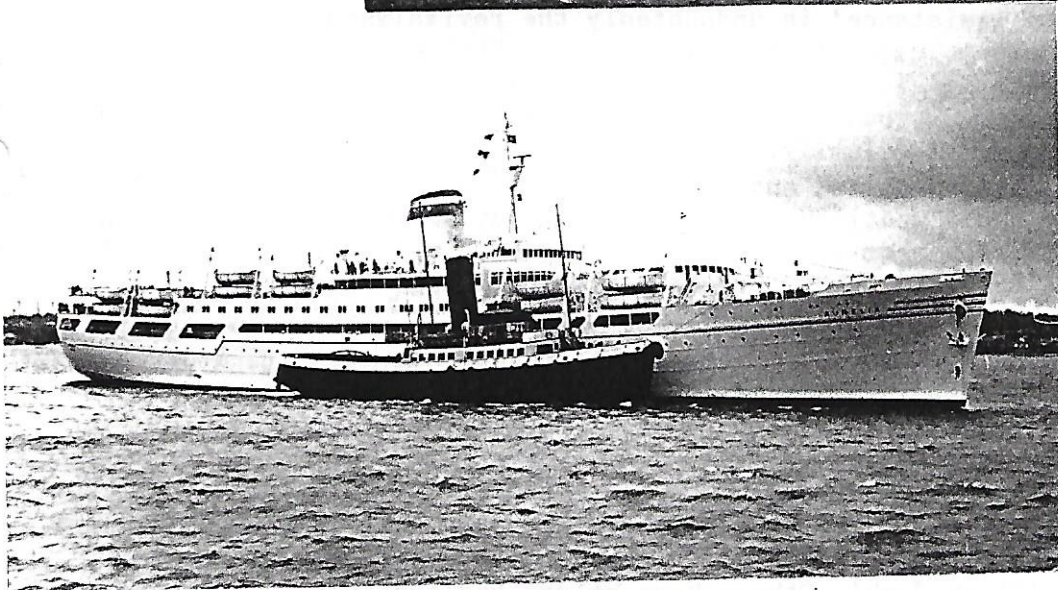
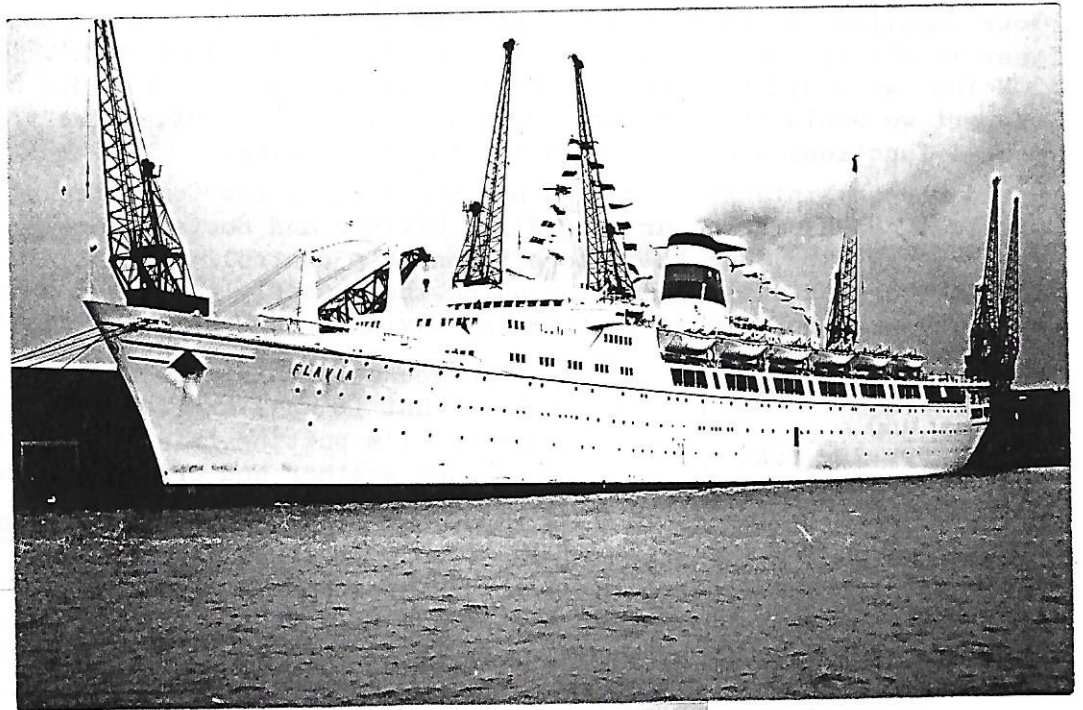
BLACK JACK

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY



WINTER 1988/89

No. 69



In the early 1960s an emigrant drive to Australia and New Zealand involved Southampton in the embarkation of emigrants. Two ships, so involved, were the Cogedar Line's (Compagnie Genovese di Armamento SpA) Aurelia (10,480 gt) and Flavia. The Aurelia was built by Blohm & Voss in 1939 as Huascaran for the Hamburg America Line; was captured in Norway in 1945, and later acquired by Canadian Pacific Steamships to become Beaverbrae. Cogedar bought her in 1954 for their Italy-Portugal-S.America run and then converted her to carry 1,120 emigrants. In September 1961 she entered the NW Europe-Southampton-Australia run until 1968 when she began a cruising career from Southampton to the Atlantic Isles under the banner of Aurelia Holiday Cruises. The Flavia (15,465 gt) was converted from Cunard white Star's Media, built at Clydebank in 1947, her first call at Southampton on 14 December 1962. Another Cogedar Line ship sometimes seen at Southampton in the 1950s was the 8,800 gt Flaminia, built in the United States in 1922 as the American-Hawaiian SS Co's Missouriian.

Published quarterly by the Southampton Branch of the World Ship Society

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SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 38th AGM

To begin factually, the figure of Branch membership stands at 70, a slight decline in full membership.

Your Committee hopes that you continued to enjoy the Branch functions over the past year ie the twelve meetings and four editions of 'Black Jack'. We agreed at the last AGM that we would try one more social function and if that did not get sufficient support we would stop trying. Regretfully, it did not, so we propose that no further social functions are to be held for the time being.

David Hornsby intends to resign his position on the Committee after sixteen years of service. He has been our Ship Visit Officer and Social Secretary, two increasingly frustrating jobs, due to factors beyond his control. He has also played a major part in other Branch activities, including the recently completed Branch Slide Show. I am sure you wish to join me in thanking David for all his services to the Branch.

<p>A MERRY XMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR</p>
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By the time you read this, the summer will have long gone (if that is what it was) and the Festive Season will be upon us. However, I'm putting this down at the end of August and the disastrous weather and cricket are very much on my mind!

I know that some of you have been to some fairly exotic locations as regards shipping and I hope that you enjoyed these visits and will show us some of the photographic souvenirs sometime. My own holiday was partly spent in the most unlikely of venues, Liverpool! In fact, it is a fascinating city which has much to offer the shipping enthusiast. The docks appear to have 'got over the worse' and there were a fair number of vessels to be seen, including conventional freighters. However, the 'piece de resistance' is undoubtedly the revitalised Albert Dock complex, on the banks of the Mersey, close to the City centre. The complex consists of a really extensive and first rate imaginative recreation of the port's maritime heritage, to be thoroughly recommended. Around the Museum is a whole selection of shops, galleries, pubs.....attractive to all the family.

Of equal pleasure was the visit to, and the hospitality of, the Merseyside Branch of the W.S.S. They hold their meetings on the same Tuesday as ourselves and I can assure you that you will receive a warm welcome, should you turn up to one of the meetings, which are held in the Central Library, right in the centre of Liverpool.

You will find the 1989 programme in this issue, which I hope will appeal to you. In particular I would ask you to take special note of our May meeting, a new venture or variation. This is a members slide/photo evening at which we would ask you to participate, on a non-competitive basis. Don't be modest, bring up to ten of your favourite and tell us about them.

This is the last 'Black Jack' produced by our Editor Bill Mitchell. It is difficult to overestimate the contribution made by Bill to this excellent journal. Over many years he has played a major part in ensuring the continued production and ever improving quality of 'Black Jack'. Others have helped and continue to play an important part in the production and success of 'Black Jack', but Bill has been ever present over the 69 editions and I am sure you wish to join me in expressing our greatest thanks. We owe you a great debt Bill.

I hope that you have a really Happy and Convivial Christmas and New Year, Editor.

Rod Baker.

10 Jan	A SHIP'S WOMEN Carola Ingall of the Maritime Museum	11 July	THE SHIPPING OF JAPAN A W.S.S. Slide Show
14 Feb	ROYAL FLEET AUXILIARY 1954-1982 Capt. John Moffatt	8 Aug	The 'DO WHAT YOU WILL' evening
14 Mar	FUNNELS, MINUS & PLUS Bert Moody	12 Sept	SHIPPING IN THE ROYAL DOCKS 1972-1973 Ian Wells (W.S.S. Branch Liaison Officer)
11 Apr	THE CLAN LINE Tony Thompson	10 Oct	39th A.G.M. and supporting programme
9 May	TEN-A-PIECE L (tell us about them) Members slide evening Non-competitive.	14 Nov	PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION (slides and prints)
13 June	SWANNING AROUND IN THE ANTIPODES-Nigel Smith	12 Dec	ROYAL MAIL LINES Rod Baker

BRANCH NOTES:

Subscriptions from 1 January 1989 will be £17.00 pa. It is important that these should be paid to the Branch Treasurer, Don Baker, and NOT direct to the World Ship Society.

Car Boot sales. Items for the car boot sale can be handed over to Bill Lawes at the monthly meetings, who has undertaken to store them until the date of sale.

Commission from the Book sale after the A.G.M. in October raised £30.00 for Branch funds.

EX-PRESS
(DT)

The wool trade

Australian scientists have invented an automatic sheep shearer after eleven years of research. But the Australian \$ 550,000 machine takes four minutes per sheep, about the same as a human shearer.

The Cruising Scene

A visitor to Kyoto saw an arrow outside the Golden Temple with the words "FOREIGNERS' TOILET". He followed the directions which led to a small pagoda set in shrubbery, and upon the door was another sign: "Honoured foreign guest please press button. Bell now ringing in town hall. Messenger coming on bicycle with key."

The Tourist trade

Yellow Buses of Bournemouth take a bold approach when advertising their open-deck tourist service from Sandbanks to Hengistbury Head. The timetable recommends: "Travel topless along the coast."

I remember.....

LIFE AS A JUNIOR OFFICER ON THE
'EMPRESS LINERS' 1949-1950

Having decided when I was twelve years of age that I would like to embark on a career at sea, my ambition was to join one of the prestigious companies that operated on the North Atlantic service, preferably Cunard White Star or Canadian Pacific Steamships Limited.

Captain John C. Moffat, RFA, now retired, tells the story of his early days in the Merchant Navy.

.....

However, I was soon to learn that it was necessary to serve in tramps or cargo liners and when I obtained a Masters Foreign Going Certificate (Class 1 Master as it is known as today), I might possibly be offered employment as a Junior Third Officer.

I served my cadetship with Clan Line Steamers Limited between 1944-49 and on completion decided to gain as much experience as possible and put my time in as quickly as possible for 1st Mate and Master.

On 28 November 1949 I walked into the Merchant Navy Officers Pool in the Broomielaw in Glasgow and asked for a job. The Superintendent, a very pleasant man, asked me if I had anything particular in mind. I was somewhat surprised as I understood companies were still building up their fleets after the large number of ships that had been lost during the Second World War. After a brief discussion about furthering my career, he said "Canadian Pacific Steamships are recruiting junior officers for their Empress liners, would you be interested?". I immediately replied "Yes Sir, I would be very interested". He said, "I will try and arrange an interview for you at the Company's office in St. Vincent Street." A quick telephone call was made and I was told to report to the Company's office at 3 pm.

Thanking the Superintendent, I left the office and made my way to the Flying Angel Missions to Seamen in James Watt Street where I bought a coffee and sat down to think, for I just could not believe that I had one foot in the door of Canadian Pacific Steamships. I had a sandwich lunch at the Mission, a quick wash and brush-up and by 2pm was walking along St. Vincent Street to ascertain exactly where the company's office was situated. Time was slow to pass but at 2.45 pm I entered the office and a pleasant woman at the reception desk asked "Can I help you Sir?". I said I had come for an interview with the Marine Superintendent, was told the company did not have a Marine Superintendent in Glasgow, but to take a seat, as she would find out if the General Manager was free. At 3 o'clock I was ushered into a large office and shaken by the hand of a man who indicated a chair in front of his desk. I was asked a number of questions regarding my cadetship and what experience I had as a Deck Officer (apart from my cadetship, my total officer experience was one month as Second Mate on a 900-ton coastal tanker). No comment was made, other than he would phone the Personnel Manager at Liverpool. He spent some ten minutes on the telephone and then asked me when I could be available. I said "immediately". After replacing the receiver he said "Subject to Medical Examination by the Company Medical Officer, we would wish you to report to the Chief Officer on board the 'Empress of France' at Liverpool on Monday, 5 December."

A few minutes chat and I was told where to go for my medical and then to report back to the office to collect my Rail Warrant. My salary was to be £27.10s per month; my pay as a cadet had been £12.10s, so I really felt 'rich'.

After my medical on 1 December I returned to the Company's office, had another interview and discussion with the General Manager and after a strong handshake and wishes for every success, I was given my travel documents and told to arrive at Liverpool not later than 6 pm on the following Monday.

At 4.30 pm on Monday 5 December I arrived at the gangway of the RMS 'Empress of France'; the ship was in the Gladstone Drydock undergoing annual refit. In drydock she looked magnificent - a 'White Empress' - with two yellow funnels on both sides of which the red and white chequered squares of the company's

houseflag were painted. The Empress of France (ex Duchess of Bedford) had been built by John Brown & Co.Ltd at Blydebank in 1928. She was one of a class of four, Duchess of York, Duchess of Atholl, Duchess of Richmond and Duchess of Bedford, all just over 20,000 gross tons, 601 ft long, 75 ft beam and with a load draft of 26 ft. They had been built for the Liverpool-Montreal service and were of shallow draft to allow them to make the passage up the St Lawrence River to Montreal. All were twin screw, with geared turbines of 21,000 shp giving a service speed of 18 knots. Passenger accommodation was for 580 cabin class and they carried a crew of 510. On account of the shallow draft the four ships earned the name of 'Drunken Duchesses' on the North Atlantic; they tended to roll heavily and were not considered to be good 'sea ships', nevertheless, they were popular ships.

On the outbreak of war in 1939 the Duchess of Atholl and Duchess of Bedford were immediately converted to troop transports, followed in 1940 by the other two of the quartet.

On 10 October 1942 the Duchess of Atholl was torpedoed and sunk by U.178, 200 miles East of Ascension Island in position 07.2 South, 11.12 W; sadly, four people were killed.

While on a voyage from Glasgow to Freetown, the Duchess of York was attacked by German long-range bombers on 11 July 1943 west of Oporto and set on fire. All but eleven of the crew and troops were taken aboard the destroyers Douglas and Iroquis and the frigate Moyola. The burning of the wreck had to be abandoned and sunk by a convoy escort.

Both Duchess of Richmond and Duchess of Bedford survived the war and on completion of trooping duties in 1946 and 1947 respectively, returned to the Clyde to undergo overhaul, refit and conversion at Fairfield's yard at Govan, prior to returning to the Liverpool-Montreal service.

During the conversion both ships had their gross tonnage increased to 20,488, and passenger capacity was reduced to 400 first class and 300 tourist class. The ships now had seven cargo holds for the carriage of 6,000 tons of cargo.

On 12 July 1947 the Duchess of Richmond was renamed Empress of Canada and sailed from Liverpool on the 16 July on her first post war voyage to Montreal. The Duchess of Bedford was renamed Empress of India on 3 March 1947, but in the same year was renamed Empress of France, for India had obtained independence from Britain in 1947 and this may have been a contributory factor to the change of name. On 1 September 1948 the Empress of France sailed on her first postwar voyage on the Liverpool-Montreal service.

When I joined the Empress of France on 5 September 1949 she had just completed her first postwar year as a passenger liner. Picking up my two suitcases, I walked up the gangway and stood on the wooden after deck; lots of space and accommodation; a far cry from my last Clan Line ship, a cargo vessel of 6,000 gross tons, built in 1922

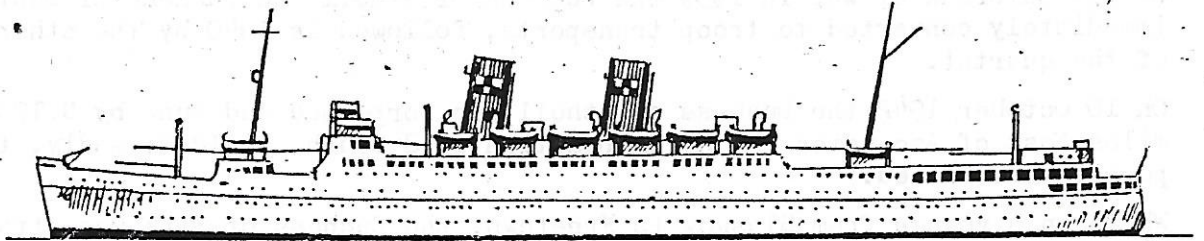
Along the after deck I saw the Chief Officer talking to two shore officials (I was later to find out they were the Ship Manager and his Assistance from Harland & Wolff. I waited until they had departed towards the promenade deck and then approached the Chief Officer.

Trained as a cadet on how to make my number to the Chief Officer, I was just about to speak when he looked at me and said "Hello, I presume you are the new 5th Officer", then extended his hand and gave a very firm handshake. A steward appeared and picked up my suitcases and said he would take them to the Officer's accommodation. I the Chief Officer to the Wardroom, which was just abaft his room where a few officers were drinking tea and introductions were made. The atmosphere was very pleasant and quite different from joining a cargo ship as a cadet! Accommodation was provided on board, but no food. I found out that we cooked our own breakfast and supper, but went ashore for a good meal at Midday. The Chief Officer cooked breakfast (porridge, bacon and eggs with plenty of toast), we all took turns at supper, usually a small meal of beans on toast or cold meat salad. We were all issued with a ration card and paid seven shillings per day to feed ourselves; being the most junior, I did the shopping on a Friday.

I remember...Life as a Junior Officer (continued):

My cabin was very comfortable, with single bunk, settee, a washbasin with hot and cold running water, an electric heater and a steam radiator; a nice carpet, writing desk, chair and a large wardrobe. The cabin was larger than I had expected and I was pleasantly surprised.

My first night on board, the Chief Officer suggested I should go ashore and have a proper meal, for I had only eaten a sandwich on the train. I was back onboard by 8 pm and did rounds with the 3rd Officer, a chap around 25 years of age who had recently obtained his Masters Certificate. (I believe he became Commodore of the Line at the early age of 42. I unpacked, went to bed at Midnight and, very tired was asleep within seconds. Next morning, at 7.30, we all sat down to what the Chief Officer termed 'a good Scottish breakfast'.

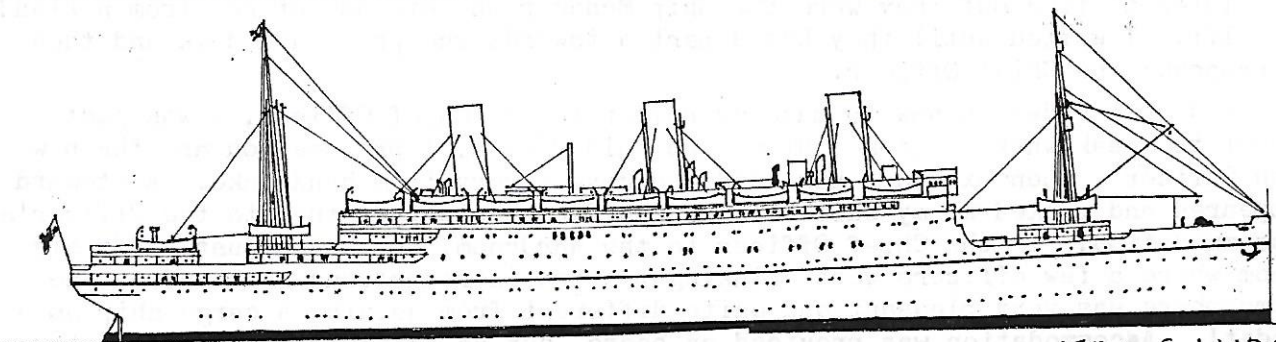


EMPRESS OF FRANCE

As the ship was undergoing overhaul, I could not have joined at a better time. I was able to find my way round the passenger decks, the bridge and radar house, explore the cargo holds, mail room and the fore and after peaks. I also did some bilge inspection, with the Chief Officer. Quite a change from actual bilge diving and cleaning strum boxes, a regular job for cadets. Aboard this ship we had shore labour to clean the bilges. I spent three happy weeks on the ship in drydock and was able to go ashore most evenings in Liverpool, a port always hospitable to the Merchant Navy; this was the 'good life' !!!!... I was granted a few days unofficial leave to go home for Christmas, but had to be back for the undocking on 29 December. During supper on the 28th I was told by the Chief Officer that he would take me to meet the Captain at 0900 the following morning. The Captain was a Commodore RNR, a very senior Captain and one of nature's gentlemen. He welcomed me to the ship and hoped I would be very happy there. I was not the first ex Clan Line cadet to serve under his command and later learned he had a high regard for Clan Line cadets.

We undocked at 11 am that day and moved into the Gladstone Dock to complete repairs and start loading for St John, New Brunswick. The Empress of Australia was also in port and I was able to go onboard and look around. She was a trooper and remained so until 1952 when she was scrapped.

On 1 January 1950, Articles were opened; we commenced to feed on board and the BOT carried out lifeboat inspection and drills. On 3 January we moved out of the Gladstone Dock to Princes Landing Stage, embarked passengers and sailed at 4.30 pm.



EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA ex TIRPITZ

JOHN S. LINDSAY 87.

I remember...Life as a Junior Officer (continued):

7

I was on the 12-4 watch with the 2nd Officer and I soon settled into the routine and determined to give my best. The trip was a week across to Halifax and very cold in January; I was soon to learn why we had an electric radiator in addition to a steam one in our cabins. A few hours to disembark passengers and mail at Halifax, then up the Bay of Fundy to St John - a good run ashore for officers. A week there, a week at sea and back to Liverpool.

I enjoyed my time on the Empress of France and was sorry to leave her in early May when I joined the Empress of Australia for a three-weeks trooping run to Gibraltar, Malta and Port Said and back to Liverpool. After one trip on the trooper I was promoted to 4th Officer and paid the magnificent sum of £31.10 shillings per month.

The Empress of Australia was formerly the Turbine Steamer Admiral von Tirpitz, built by 'Vulcan', Stettin for the Hamburg America Line. Although launched in 1913, she was not completed until November 1920 and in 1914 her name had been changed to Tirpitz. She was handed over to Great Britain and managed as a troop ship by the P & O for the Shipping Controller and on 25 July 1921 was sold to Canadian Pacific. The ship had a gross tonnage of 21,498, a length of 615 ft and 75.1 ft breadth; draught was 29 ft. Her turbine engines with Föttinger hydraulic gearing were by the 'Vulcan' company. Passenger capacity was for 370 first, 190 2nd class and 1,000 steerage; crew numbered 500. On 28 July 1921 she was renamed Empress of China. From August 1921 until May 1922 she was given an extensive overhaul by 'Vulcan', Hamburg and John Brown, Clydebank with a gross tonnage increase to 21,860. In 1922 she was renamed Empress of Australia and sailed from Glasgow on 16 June 1922 to Vancouver and thence to the Pacific Service to Yokohama.

In 1923 the Empress of Australia rescued hundreds of people from the great earthquake at Tokyo. The pier at Yokohama was shattered after the first shock, just as the ship was putting to sea and she was literally swirled through the harbour. However, she was quickly brought under control and lowered her boats, then again became unmanoeuvrable as her screws became entangled in the anchor chains of another vessel. The Empress of Australia collided with a Japanese cargo ship and was now drifting, with over 2,000 people onboard, towards a burning oil field. After sending out an SOS, the Empress was towed into open water by the Dutch tanker Iris. During this time the liner's boats continued with the rescue work. For a week the ship remained at Yokohama, supplying rescue teams to work in the city; also feeding and sheltering many hundreds of injured and homeless people. The Captain has made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

In 1926 the ship returned to the Clyde where Fairfields were given the contract to fit new Parsons turbines, the work lasting until June 1927. The speed was now increased to 19 knots from a SHP of 18,000. Her maximum was 20 knots. Accommodation was altered to 400 first, 150 second and 630 third class. The ship made her first voyage from Southampton to Quebec on 25 June 1927. Then there was a spell of cruising with accommodation for 387 first, 394 second and 358 third. A 3rd class fare for fourteen days cruising was 25 shillings £1.25 per day.

In 1939 the Empress of Australia was commissioned as a unit of the Royal Navy. She was to carry King George VI and Queen Elizabeth for the Royal Visit to Canada. The King occupied the principal suite on 'A' Deck Port side and the Queen had a matching suite on the Starboard side. Throughout the rest of the liner's career the suites of 'A' Deck remained as they were when occupied by the King and Queen, although later the OC troops occupied the King's room and the Permanent RAMC Medical Officer, the Queen's room. This was the liner's last Canadian trip as a passenger ship.

Commissioned as a troopship in September 1939 she was to remain as such until May 1952 when she was scrapped at Inverkeithing. As Fourth Officer on the Empress of Australia I kept the 4-8 watch with the First Officer (he was later to become Marine Superintendent at Liverpool), a fine seaman and an excellent navigator, this, together with his great sense of humour made, being his junior watch-mate, a very pleasant and instructive tour of duty.

Christmas in Dar es Salaam-
 'Haven of Peace'. What a
 sweat! If we hadn't had
 to pay that beastly income
 tax we could have been at
 Lushoto, 5,000 feet up
 in the West Usambara
 Mountains, golfing and
 fishing. Or even in
 Nairobi, in Kenya, same
 height. David and Lorna
 went to Lushoto. Of course,
 it rained all the time,
 but, at least, one can
 breathe up there. Better
 than this blazing sun and
 mucky heat. Alex went to
 Nairobi. Not quite the same
 as the old days, but still
 Nairobi. But then, Alex is
 in oil.....

Dear old stinking Dar. Why
 do we stay here? We have
 friends, but we have them
 elsewhere too. Lots of
 nice people in Dar, but even more horribly dull types. What a fag! We could have
 driven up the coast to Bagamoyo, about fifty miles, but that's a fag too. And the
 same dull people, of course. How depressing.

Christmas Eve at the office was just hell. Why must shippers and agents always want
 Bills of Lading, cargo manifests and other wretched shipping documents at this time
 of the year? Two ships arrived Christmas Day, one at 3 o'clock! Bad show. And
 those Xmas Eve drinks at lunch at the Club. How was I to know that those extra
 shipments and the wretched documents were coming? Left the office about six....knew
 Jane would be furious. Dropped in the Club for a quick one. John was there.....
 insisted on another...Merry Christmas and all that. Bob and Steve turned up. Good
 scouts, bachelors, lucky chaps! Do what they like and how they like. Got home at
 7.30. Jane was furious. Nearly dressed, too.

Arrived at Frank and Kay's place half an hour late, at eight thirty....most of the
 guests arrived later! "Got caught up with so and so old boy...terribly sorry
 and all that.....".

Good party though. Home on the beach. Sand.....sometimes snakes....even a leopard
 sniffing around last Christmas. Drought brings them looking for new waterholes;
 never seen when there's sheets of water around. No good here....water bracken.
 Can't drink the stuff myself. Abominable stuff, water. Frank's an architect. Must
 be fun building homes for other people. Kay's nice. Redhead. I like redheads.
 All went for a swim at three...or was it four? Nice swimming at night....great big
 moon....and cool. Got home at five - not too tired. Houseboy woke me at
 eight....idiot.

Christmas Day morning, ten o'clock. Jane still asleep. Time for a beer. Dennis and
 Joan arrived. What a cruchy racket that old Peugeot makes on the drive. Blast. Had
 to take towel off and put some clothes on. Dennis full of beans...almost indecent
 with his Hail fellow and all that...at that time on a Christmas morning! Bad show.
 Had three beers, felt better. Good, cold beer. Think I'll have another one now.
 The local brew's better than that imported costly stuff. Quick lunch. Dashed to
 office for documents, then to ship which arrived at three o'clock. Captain said
 Merry Christmas and opened a bottle of that costly imported stuff. Must say it
 tasted better than the Local! Home again, managed a little snooze, then went

Christmas

in

DAR ES SALAAM

Some after Christmas thoughts of
 a Shipping Agent in the tropics.

CHRISTMAS IN DAR ES SALAAM (continued):

round to the Club for a reviver at six. Len and Adam were there. Both in shipping. Had just met other ship arriving. Felt better after a bottle or two. Jane furious when I got back. Lots of people in for drinks. Where the hell is that bottle opener use the window frame....useful invention, metal frames....just fit the crown stopper Dinner at the Club. Eight around the table including the retired Judge.....nice cha but his yarns are a bit dull.

Danced until two, balloons, funny hat, bubbly, giggles...silly, but helps one forget the heat and damp shirt. Hot this year. Nearly as hot as two years ago when Buckl got prickly heat for the first time. After twenty-five years on the coast too..... Retired now, pining his heart away in England...beastlyfog and sleet. Can't stand fo sleet or the cold... Blast this heat....

Went to Des and Joan's place after the dance. Few beers. Went to sleep in a chair. Jane furious. Woke at four. Sun just coming up. Jane went home ages ago. Got home, flopped on the bed. Boy woke me at eight. Told the clot not to..... he never listens.

Boxing Day. Almost dressed by 10.30 when Les and Greta arrived. Nice people. Usef to know too. Les works in a brewery. Invited us round for a pint from the cask. This Dar es Salaam beer isn't bad.....better than Nairobi. Can't understand why Nairobi people say it isn't. Question of taste, I suppose. Won't kill me anyhow, I hope. Had to go to a kid's party in afternoon. Awful bore. But the kids enjoye it. Sometimes wish I was a kid. Nothing to worry about. Everything new. Never bored. Felt quite paternal. Nice to see people happy. Missed sleep, though. Bad! Went to Club at six. Met Len and Adam. Jane furious when I got back.

Ocean Breeze Nightclub for dinner and dance. Good place, Ocean Breeze. Once a hous Don't know how we got on without Ocean Breeze. Right on cliffs....edge of sea... cool.....very cool. Two dance floors....inside....outside. Met Tom and Penny ther Down from Nairobi. Used to be in Dar. Glad to be back. "Like to coast, old chap. Can't bear Nairobi. High, you know. Bad for the heart. Give me sea-level, sunshin and sanity every time, Ha, Ha!" Maybe he's right. Good chap, Tom. High in the Post Office now...not a bad job. Perhaps telegrams will be better now. Told him about one I had from a bush station near Lake Tanganyika. Took three days. Line broke down. Boy had to carry it in a cleft stick. No joke. Reminds me of the floods when post boys went on strike in SouthernProvince. Don't blame 'em. Crodil took two of 'em when they were swimming across the river. No air mail either. Roads impassable. Forgot my Christmas Cards again that year. Missed the last ship. Had to send cable. Expensive. Tom and Penny came back to our place for a nightcap after the dance. Stayed till three-thirty. Jane very tired. And me. Locked bedroo door; no nonsense with the boy this time. Boy hammered on door at eight o'clock... no sleep for the wicked.....

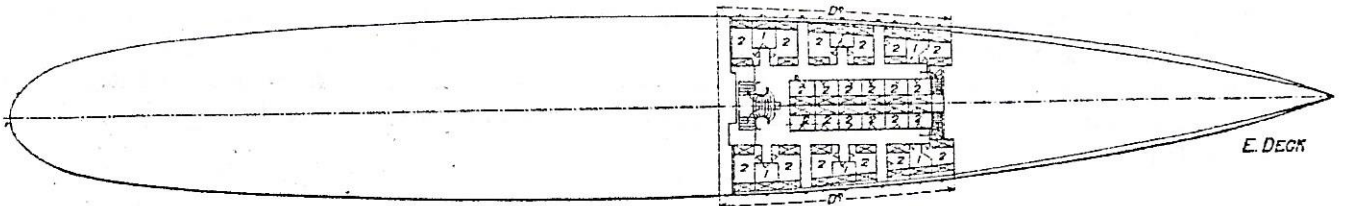
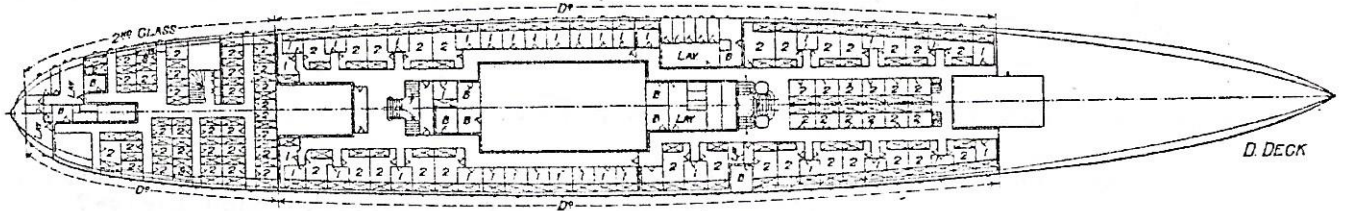
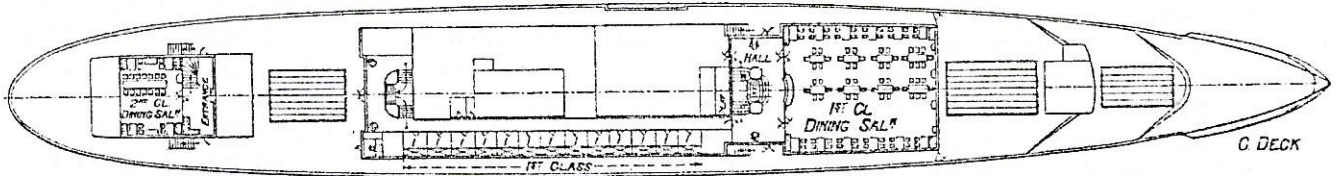
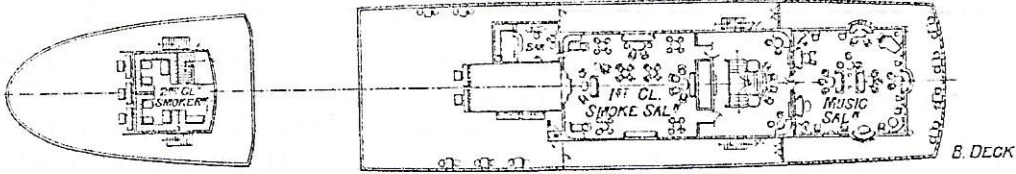
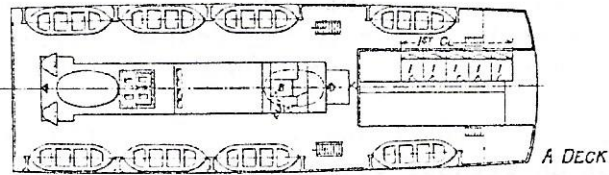
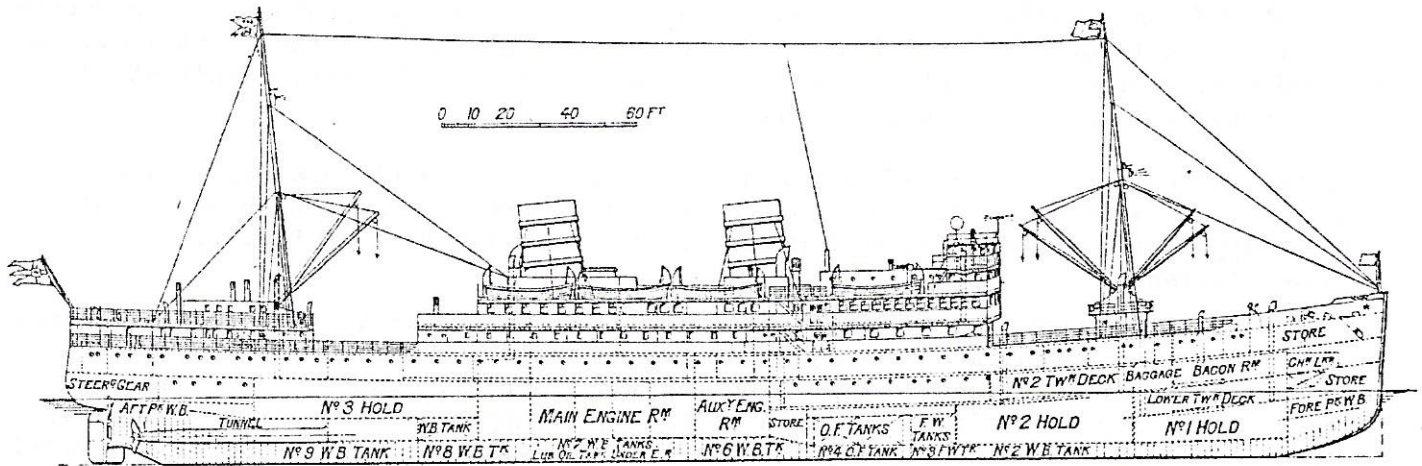
Sunday today. No work, no parties. Just peace.....

Damn. There goes the telephone. "Hallo Bob. Come round for a little party, you say? Glad to, old boy. What time? Okay. Finish early.....around twelve? That's grand. Bring my own beer tankard? Sorry about the opener old boy, lost mine, use window frames. You haven't got metal window frames? Bad luck, better move to another house. Of course Jane will come. Drop down to the Club for a quick one? Be there around six.....Cheerio.....Yes, yes, the Club..... so long for now.....".

...

TWIN-SCREW PASSENGER AND CARGO MOTORSHIP

“VENUS.”



Profile and Cabin Plans of the "Venus."

The Bergen Steamship Company (Det Bergenske Dampskibsselskab, Bergen), founded in 1851 were first in the field to carry mails between the Tyne and Norway in the three-masted steamship Jupiter, 2,625 gt in 1861. In June 1926 the Riverside Quay at Albert Dock, North Shields, was opened and apart from the war years, the company - B & N Line - berthed ships there. In May 1931 B & N Line brought out the motorship Venus, the second ship in the company's history so named for the service and on her maiden voyage the crossing time to Norway was reduced from 26 to 21 hours.

At that time the Bergen SS Company fleet listed over fifty ships and apart from the fast passenger and mail service across the North Sea, it was also well-known for tourist cruises along the Norwegian coast, and for the development of winter cruising in the Mediterranean and Far East. The experience gained in running the steam yacht Meteor and motor yacht Stella Polaris no doubt influenced the planning and construction of the Venus.

The Venus was built by the Elsinore Shipbuilding & Engineering Company and was considered the fastest motor-driven passenger ship in the world, her two B & W engines giving 20 knots. Overall length was 412 ft 10, breadth was 54 ft and tonnages were 5,407 gross and 2,400 deadweight.

On January 1937 she made the news by rescuing the crew of the Norwegian cargo ship Trym.

In 1940 the Venus was seized by the Germans, transformed into a U-boat depot ship, Viktor, and at the end of war became a victim of allied bombers, being sunk and lying partially submerged in Hamburg Harbour.

Although extensively damaged forward, she was raised in autumn 1945 and moved to Elsinore, there beginning a long and costly conversion, the company taking the opportunity to remodel the interior. In 1948, as almost a new ship, her length was 420 ft and gross tonnage 6,269 and with an extended 2nd class accommodation, she returned to service.

The Venus was built for one night crossings from Newcastle to Bergen and was not a cruise ship, but in 1948 began a winter service from Southampton, her many facilities normally available in cruise ships, being available in sailings every ten days to Madeira and Tenerife.

In the early 1950s she broke her moorings during a winter storm at Southampton and grounded. Salvage work became a rather serious problem, but she was eventually refloated.

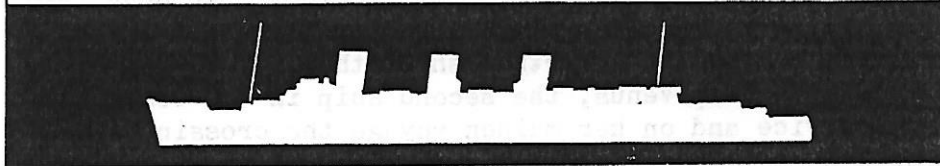
Later she was given stabilisers, which greatly helped against a large superstructure.

In 1965 the Venus emerged from overhaul with a white hull and yellow funnels and later that year made Mediterranean cruises. In 1966 she was replaced on the North Sea run by the New Jupiter and was moved to the Bergen-Rotterdam route. In September 1969 she arrived at Faslane for breaking up.

In 1938 the Vega was completed, the largest vessel engaged in the service across the North Sea to Newcastle. A twin screw motorship, she came from Cantiere Dell' Adriatico, Trieste. Her measurements were 424.6 ft x 58.3 ft; her gross tonnage was 7,287.

In 1940 she, too, was taken by Germany and on 5 May 1945 was sunk by air attack on Lubeck. She was later recovered and sold for scrap.

old southampton callers



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

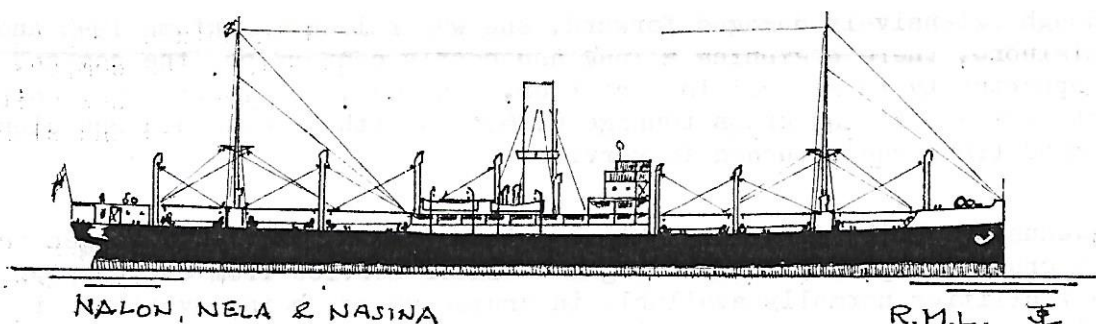
(Part IV) The 'N' ships)
by John S. Lindsay
(continued)

After the Lord Kylsant affair of the 1920s, a new company, Royal Mail Lines Ltd., was formed in 1932 and took the old Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, RMSPP Meat Transports Ltd, the Nelson Steam Navigation Co.Ltd., and David McIver & Co.Ltd as subsidiaries under its title. The ships from these companies were transferred to the Royal Mail Lines flag and their liveries were changed to that of the old R.M.S.P. Company which remained unchanged under the new order.

The first three ships were originally under the Lamport & Holt Line flag, Meisonier, Murillo and Moliere and Highland Warrior of the Nelson Line.

Nela (ex Moliere)

The Nela was the first of the trio to be built for the Lamport & Holt Line as Moliere by Russell & Company, Glasgow. Tonnages were 7,206 gross and 8,200 tdw on dimensions of 440 ft x 56.2 ft x 35.7; draught 28 ft 4 in. Her twin screws were driven by two sets of quadruple expansion engines with four cylinders developing 885 nhp and giving a service speed of 12½ knots. These were built by D.Rowan of Glasgow. Coal bunker capacity was for 1,784 tons and cargo capacity was 311,000 cf bales, 323,000 cf refrigerated in 40 chambers. Crew numbered 45.



NALON, NELA & NASINA

R.M.L. J.E.

Built of steel, with three decks and shelter deck, the fo'c'sle was 44 ft in length. Six hatches were served by twenty derricks. At the top of bridge level there was a platform around the funnel for the purpose of lowering the top part when proceeding up the Manchester Ship Canal. The Moliere entered service during the 1914-18 war and then continued with Lamport & Holt until 1929 when she was transferred to the Nelson Line with the same name; changed to Nela when taken over by Royal Mail Lines in 1932. One of her first duties under the new flag was to work under charter to the Union-Castle Line to carry fruit from South Africa to Southampton until the arrival of their new 'R'-class motorships. She wore the Union-Castle livery with their black cargo ship hull and could be seen frequently in the Western Docks. After the charter ended she returned to her RML duties, survived World War II and was broken up at Ghent in 1946.

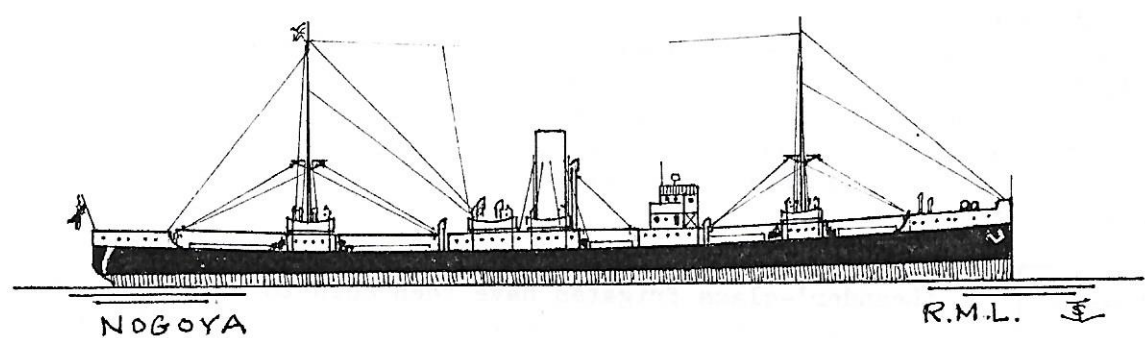
Nasina (ex Meisonier)

Built by Russell & Co., Glasgow and launched in June 1915 as Meisonier for the Lamport & Holt Line, her details were as for the Moliere. In 1929 she was transferred to the Nelson Line and was taken over by Royal Mail Lines in 1932 as Nasina, being chartered out to the Union-Castle for the South African fruit trade. In 1935 she was sold to the Societa Anonima Cooperativa di Nav.Garibaldi, Genoa and renamed Asmara. In 1939 she was taken over by the Italian Navy as a troopship and

Old Southampton Callers continued:

on 11th August 1943 was sunk off Brindisi by the British submarine HMS Unshaken Nalon (ex Murillo)

The last of the trio laid down by Russell & Company was the Murillo, for Lamport & Holt and entered their service in September 1915. Details as for Moliere but refrigerated cargo space 316,000 cf in 40 chambers. Her career was the same as the others; transferred to the Nelson Line in 1929 and taken over by Royal Mail Lines in 1932 to be renamed Nalon. Chartered by Union-Castle for the South African fruit trade, then resumed service in the Royal Mail fleet until 6 November 1940 when she was attacked and sunk by enemy aircraft in position 53.15N 15.31W.



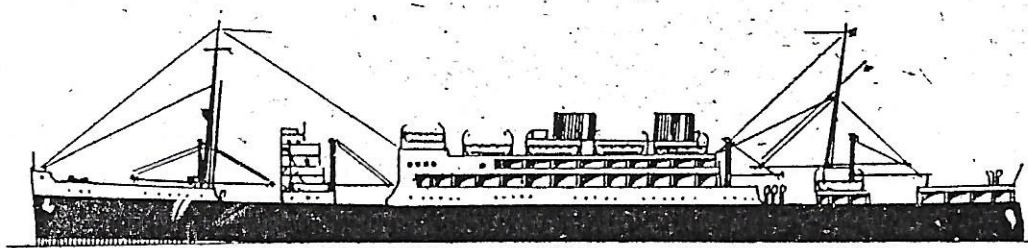
NOGOYA (ex Highland Warrior)

The last of the 'N's to be acquired by the Royal Mail Lines was built by Barclay, Curle & Company, Glasgow. She was laid down as a standard 'G'-class ship and acquired by the Nelson Line in 1920, then being given the name Highland Warrior. Her bridge was one deck higher than the other 'G'-class ships. Tonnages were 8,442 gross and 10,500 tdw on measurements of 465 ft (oa) 450.4 x 58.2 x 37.2; draught was 29.3 ft. Her single screw was driven by double reduction turbine which developed 1,005 HP and steam was supplied by four single-ended oil-fired boilers; speed was 13 knots. She had two decks and shelter deck; her fo'c'tle was 43 ft in length and the poop 31 ft in length. Bunker capacity was for 1,887 tons of fuel oil and cargo capacity was for 444,000 cf train, 416,000 cf bales; 416,000 refrigerated in 25 chambers.

She ran in the Nelson fleet until taken over by Royal Mail Lines in 1932. In 1935 she was laid up at Netley, then sold next year to Kaye, Son & Company and renamed Marlene. Her turbines were removed by Wm Denny at Dumbarton and replaced by a set of triple expansion engines. She sailed as the Marlene until 4 April 1941 when she was torpedoed by U.124 south-west of Freetown, West Africa and sank.

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THE NELSON LINE fleet included a class of six passenger/refrigerated cargo motorships, built in 1928/1932 for H & W Nelson Ltd.,



which came under the Royal Mail flag in 1932. The prototype was Highland Monarch (1928), followed by Highland Chieftain and Highland Brigade (1929), Highland Hope and Highland Princess (1930) and Highland Patriot (1932). Except Highland Hope (Govan), all were built at Belfast. Dimensions were 544 ft x 69 ft, 14,100 gross tons. The Highland Hope was lost on the Farilhoes Rocks, Portuguese coast in November 1930. The Highland Patriot on 1, October 1940 by a torpedo from U.38, some 500 miles west of Bishops Rock. The remaining four served in the postwar London/River Plate intermediate service.

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nautical notebook

Tug for Singapore The last tug of the United Towing Ltd of Hull arrived at Southampton in September to prepare for her voyage to Far East. The Irishman, twin screw, 686 gt as built in 1978, has been sold to Semco Salvage Pte Ltd.,

Singapore. She left Southampton renamed Salvision. Both Irishman and her sistership, Yorkshireman, came from Cochrane Shipbuilders Ltd., Selby. She, too, was sold to Semco. At one time the United Towing Co. Ltd., was one of the largest tugowners in Britain. Just after the war they owned 35 tugs. Currently two salvage ships remain in the fleet, Salvageman, laid up at Hull, and Moorsman.

Tugs for the Greek Navy On 15 October the Dutch tug Ierland, 448 gt, 1976, belonging to the Goliath Transport & Shipping BV, arrived at 106 berth, towing the semi-submersible barge Goliath Caribic (ex Big Lift 121). Already on the submersible was a large crane-barge, Hubinsen N, which had been loaded at Bremerhaven and was destined for Turkey. Overnight, five U.S. Army tugs from the U.S. Fleet Centre at Hythe, were floated on to the submersible, these destined for delivery to the Greek Navy at Piraeus. The Ierland, with her huge tow, left on Monday 17th. The US tugs were Green Springs (ST 1983); Fort Stanwix (ST 179); Schoharie (ST 1984); Sag Harbor (ST 2125) and un-named (ST 1987) with no propeller fitted.

Bill Lawe's NAVAL NOTES

A footnote in the last edition of Black Jack mentioned that two of the 'Leander'-class frigates have been sold to Pakistan. One of these, the Apollo, spent several days in drydock at Southampton, refitting prior to her transfer. As one of the later, or 'Wide Beam' type of ships of the class, the Apollo did not undergo any major refit to replace the twin 4.5-in turret with either four Exocet or an Ikara missile system that the earlier vessels of the 'Leander'-class had, to extend their active career in the Royal Navy. For many years the 'Leander'-class were the 'backbone' of the Royal Navy's frigate fleet, but they are now being sold to foreign navies, scrapped, or sunk as targets as they become 'surplus to requirements'. Unfortunately, replacement vessels are not being provided, so the politician's pledge of a 50-ship fleet of destroyers and frigates seems a shallow promise.

A second frigate to pay a brief visit to the port was HMS Battleaxe, one of the Batch I 'Type 22' ships of the 'Broadsword'-class. She arrived as escort to the Royal Yacht for her annual visit to Southampton to transport the Queen to her Scottish holiday. The 'Battleaxe' was built by Yarrow, Scotstoun and completed in 1980. She displaces 4,400 tons full load and is armed with a 4-Exocet SSM, 2-Sea Wolf SAM systems, 2 x 40mm and 2 x 20mm AA plus 6 A.S.W. TT. She can operate two Lynx helicopters. When completed, this class were the first all-missile-armed ships in the Navy, but as a result of the Falklands War, the later Type III vessels are being completed with a single Mark 8 4.5-in gun forward. Like most of the modern British naval vessels, the Battleaxe is powered by Olympus and Tyne Gas Turbines which give a maximum speed of 29 knots.

MOTOR BARGE SOLD Williams Shipping Co (Fawley) Ltd sold another of their motor barges, the Wilburnia, in August. Her new owners are the Irish Electricity Board (Fisheries Division).

Mordey, Carney ships

In Black Jack No.39 (Summer 1981), notes were printed regarding the old Woolston Yard of Morney, Carney & Company, who built thirty-four craft at the turn of the century. No yard list seems to exist and when information has come to light regarding the ships built at the yard, it has been printed in Black Jack. Two more to add to the list are:

Bison, launched 1. November 1902. 165 ft x 26 ft. RFA stores carrier for Naval Ordnance Depot.

1946: Parita (Dabiabe de Navegacao SA, Panama.)

Emily Charlotte, built 1896. 90.2 x 18.1 ft. 2cyl compound engines. Built for the Port Talbot Railway & Docks Co (1922 GWR). Based at Port Talbot until sold in 1933.