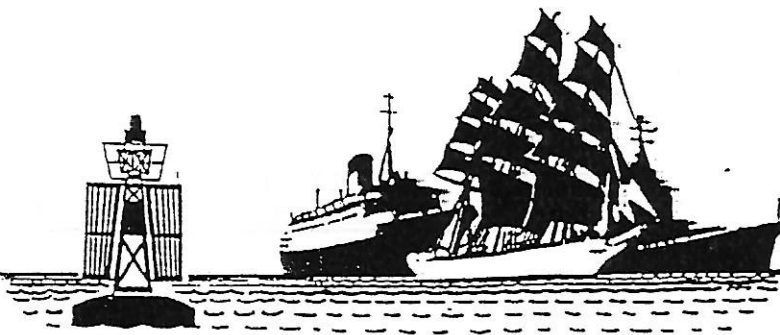


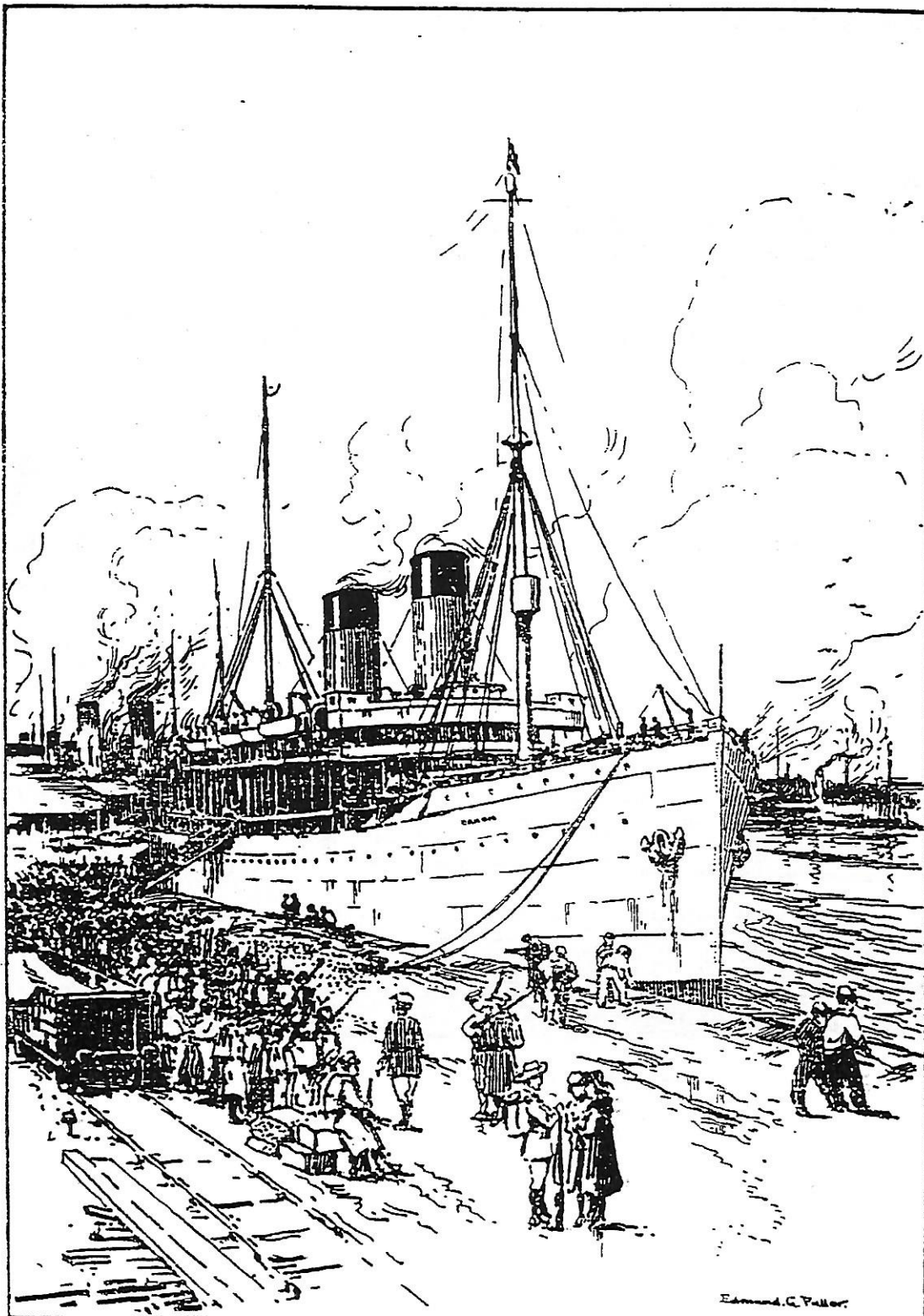
BLACK JACK

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY



WINTER 1993/94

No. 88



Colonial Troops embarking at Southampton for home.

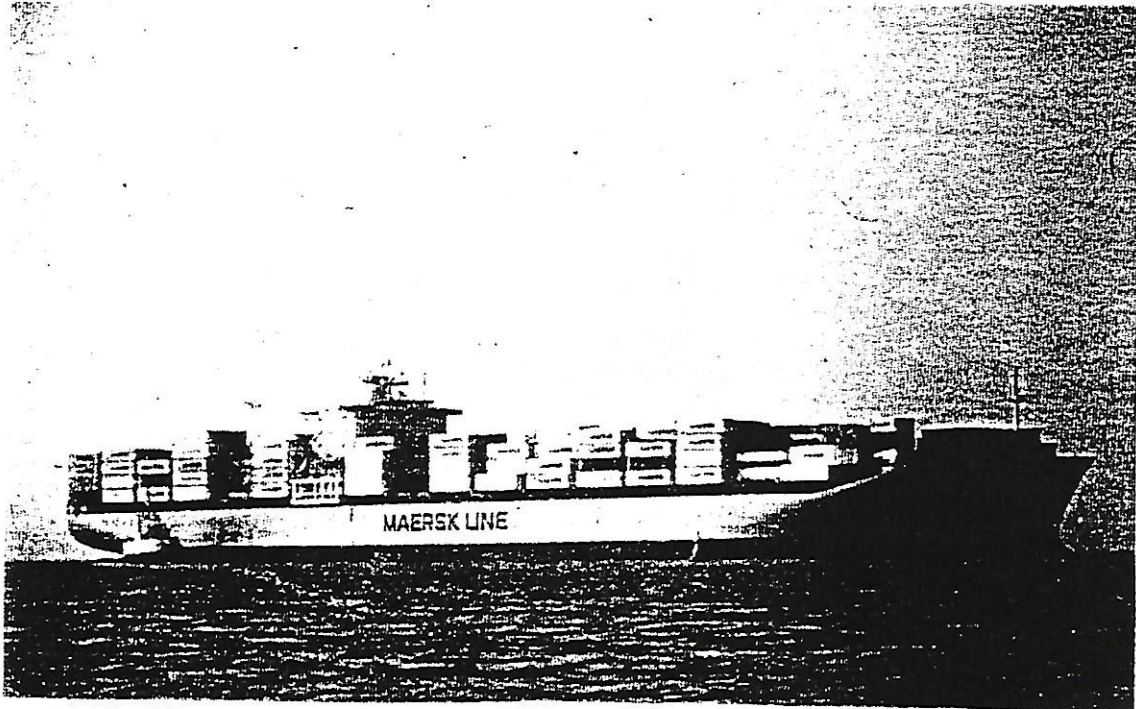
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH OF
THE WORLD SHIP SOCIETY

Branch Officials:-

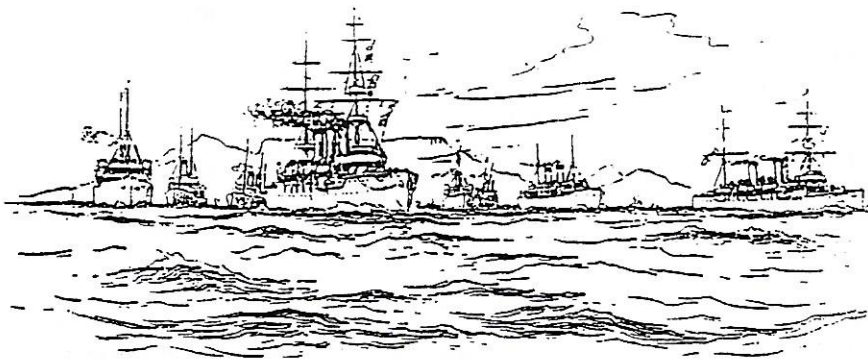
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BILL MITCHELL

At the January meeting John Lindsay reported on a visit he had paid to Bill Mitchell. Bill is not at all well at the present time and is unable to get to our meetings. The members present at the January meeting expressed their concern for Bill's health and all wished to be remembered to him and they hope it will be possible to have him with us again. Bill has been a great supporter of our Branch and was a previous Editor of this bulletin.



The "MAYVLEW MAERSK" From a slide taken
by the Secretary.



CHAPTER II: SUMMARY OF THE WAR WORK OF THE UNION-CASTLE CO.

THE following summary of the operations of the Union-Castle Company at Southampton between August 4th, 1914, and November 27th, 1918, will demonstrate the magnitude of the service that a great shipping company can render to the country in time of war.

TRANSPORTS.—During the first year of the war (and on a few occasions since) various steamers of the Company, while based on Southampton, landed and embarked at that and other ports of the United Kingdom a total of 108,866 officers and troops. In addition to the above, the *Prince George*, a steamer managed by the Company for the Admiralty, carried from Southampton to the French ports an estimated number of 80,000 troops; while the *Huntscraft* and *Hunslet*, which the Company also managed on behalf of the Admiralty, regularly carried troops across Channel and also conveyed to the French coast not less than 166,500 tons of munitions; stores, and horses. The Company also had some of its own vessels, based on Southampton, constantly engaged in the transport of horses, mules, motor vehicles, guns, and munitions.

In connection with the transport of troops the following details are of interest. On the declaration of the

THE UNION CASTLE AND THE WAR 1914-1918

David Hutchings had the good fortune to recently acquire a copy of the above book published by the Company in 1920. He thought the chapter reproduced here might be of some interest to Branch members.

war ten of the Company's steamers were rapidly prepared at Southampton and within a fortnight had made thirteen trips to France, carrying a considerable part of the First Expeditionary Force—"the Old Contemptibles." Two of the Company's ships, the *Dunvegan Castle* and *Norman*, which had been lying off Netley when war broke out, landed in France the first instalment of British troops on August 10th.

On September 19th, 1914, the six Union-Castle steamers depicted in the famous convoy picture "From the Ends of the Earth at the Empire's Need," arrived at Southampton with 5,072 officers and men, and 376 women and children, together with guns, vehicles, baggage, and equipment.

On October 9th, 1914, six of the Company's ships embarked a portion of the Territorial Expeditionary Force for Egypt and India, conveying a total of 6,680 officers and men, with guns, vehicles, etc.

When the situation in Flanders was very critical in the early stages of the war, Lord Kitchener, urgently in need of every man he could find to supplement the First Expeditionary Force and help to stem the German rush, arranged for the intercepting of various merchant vessels, at the time on the high seas, and their despatch to Mediterranean and other ports, so as to bring home as rapidly as possible such detachments of troops as might be there. The enormous value of wireless telegraphy to a sea power like Great Britain in time of war was now made manifest, and the enterprise of the owners of our magnificent liners was found to be equal to the occasion.

Thus, towards the end of August, 1914, a battalion of the Buffs and some other details, on their way down the Mediterranean, reached Gibraltar, where there happened to be no vessel available to carry them to England. Lord Kitchener consulted the Union-Castle Company and ascertained that one of their ships, the *Edinburgh Castle* (a 17-knot vessel, of 13,000 gross tonnage, which shortly afterwards was converted into an armed cruiser), was coming up from South Africa with mails and over 1,200 passengers. It was decided to intercept her by wireless and divert her to Gibraltar, where the troops were to stand ready with horses, baggage, and necessary provisions, to board her immediately after her arrival.

The wireless was got to work from the Admiralty building in London to some of our warships, and, in the evening of August 28th, the *Edinburgh Castle*, then some hundreds of miles to the westward of the entrance to the Mediterranean, picked up a Marconi message from H.M.S. *Vindictive*, ordering her to proceed to Gibraltar. So she at once altered her course for Cape Spartel. She arrived off Cape Spartel early in the morning of August 30th, and was there met by H.M.S. *Canopus*, which supplied her with the necessary charts, and gave her a pilot to take her through the mine-fields off the dock entrance. Four hours later the *Edinburgh Castle* was lying alongside the Government dock at Gibraltar; the work of fitting up horse-boxes, etc., was at once commenced; the troops were embarked; and at seven o'clock the next morning she sailed for England, the troops occupying her decks. Men-of-war were ordered to escort her, and handed her on from one to the other. On September 1st she was stopped by H.M.S. *Minerva*, and was ordered to keep one mile astern of that ship, which would convoy her to England. That afternoon she had to stop again to take on board the crew of the Austrian steamer *Bathori*, which had been sunk by the *Minerva*, and by that time she must have had many more souls on board than any Union-Castle ship ever carried before.

She reached Southampton at midnight, September 3rd; the troops were immediately thrown across to France; and within a week of Lord Kitchener's decision to intercept the *Edinburgh Castle* by wireless, these men were face to face with the enemy in the fighting line, and suffered badly in the terrible but heroic struggle of that anxious time, when the few stubbornly held the pass against the many.

HOSPITAL SHIPS.—One of the most important duties of the Union-Castle Company in the war consisted in the fitting and manning of several of their vessels as hospital ships. As those who visited these ships in Southampton docks can testify, the adaptation of these passenger steamers to their new purpose was admirably carried out, and everything was done that could contribute to the comfort of our wounded.

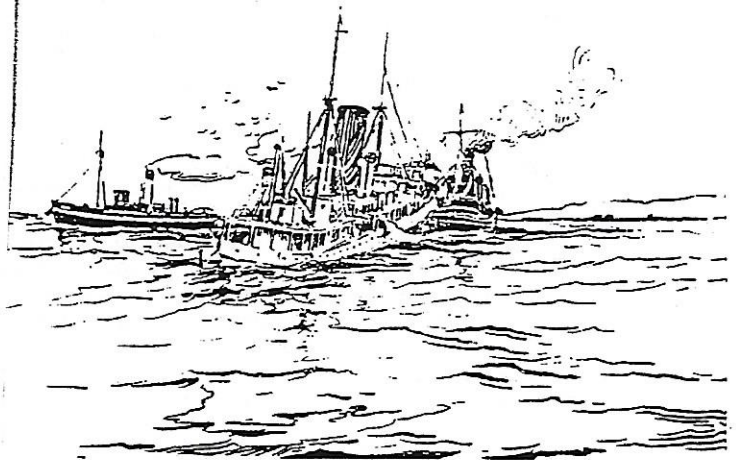
In the conveyance of cot cases the operations of the Company's steamers in cross-Channel work far exceeded

Of these the first four were totally lost, while the last two were successfully salvaged. In connection with these disasters, and services rendered to the Government, some of the captains and officers were awarded the O.B.E., D.S.O., Honourable Mention, etc. How well they earned their honours will be made manifest in some of the narratives which will be given further on.

The Union-Castle Company also fitted out one of their intermediate liners, the *Garth Castle*, a ship of 7,715 tons, as a naval hospital ship. Early in the war the naval hospital ship *Rohilla* was lost in a storm off the Yorkshire coast, losing two-thirds of her sick-berth ratings, the majority of whom were of the St. John's Ambulance Association. So the *Garth Castle* was converted and staffed to replace her. She was splendidly equipped with everything needed for a thoroughly up-to-date hospital. She was the hospital ship of the Grand Fleet from December, 1914 until the armistice, and remained with it throughout the war, save for a short period when she was sent to Malta, in view of the lack of sufficient ships for dealing with the sick and wounded from the Dardanelles. Her work was done at one or the other of the three bases of the Grand Fleet—Scapa Flow, the Firth of Forth, and Cromarty Firth. During the armistice the *Garth Castle* was employed in carrying British wounded repatriated prisoners of war home from Germany, Holland, and France.

those of any other line in importance and numbers. On the average four or five of the Company's larger intermediate ships, supplemented by the *Western Australia*, a steamer which was managed by the Company for the Admiralty, were engaged as hospital ships from the commencement of the war up to the time, early in 1917, when the Germans began to carry out their scheme of unrestricted submarine operations; after which these ships continued to carry on their hospital work under the designation of ambulance transports, sailing under new conditions which will be described later. In addition to the cross-Channel work some of these ships also brought to Southampton our wounded from the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, India, and other regions. These steamers, based on Southampton, engaged in the overseas and cross-Channel services, brought in a total of 331,404 wounded British officers and men, and 8,279 enemy wounded.

While engaged in this important work, six of the company's hospital ships, as I have already stated, were torpedoed or mined. These were the *Dover Castle*, the *Galeata*, the *Glenart Castle* (twice), the *Llandoverly Castle*, the *Braemar Castle*, and the *Gloucester Castle*.



ARMED MERCHANT CRUISERS.—Each of the great shipping companies, at the beginning of the war, fitted out some of their vessels as armed cruisers, which fought like men-of-war under the White Ensign, and were mainly manned by their merchant crews. Thus the Union-Castle liners, the *Armada Castle*, which was in port on the declaration of the war, and the *Kinfauns Castle*, which arrived at Southampton from South Africa on the 4th August, 1914, were fitted out by the Company as armed merchant cruisers; and with such promptitude was the work of converting these peaceful passenger steamers into comparatively formidable men-of-war carried out, that the *Armada Castle* was completed and sailed from Southampton in her new character as a fighting-ship on August 11th, and the

Kinfauns Castle, which of course had to disembark passengers, mails, and baggage, and discharge her cargo, before the work of conversion could be commenced, sailed fully equipped on August 15th. Some details of the conversion of the *Armadale Castle*, and the narrative of a portion of her adventurous cruise in the first year of the war, will be given in a subsequent chapter.

SALVAGE.—It has been explained that the Union-Castle Company, at the opening of the war, had placed at the disposal of the naval authorities its entire organisation at Southampton, including the personnel and machinery of its salvage department. The Company, acting in conjunction with the Admiralty, did some notable salvage work in the war. The following will serve as examples.

After the Company's hospital ship, the *Galeka*, had been mined, she lay on the rocks near Havre for nearly three months, during which time the salvage work was carried on. But the vessel herself could not be saved, and, despite all efforts, eventually became a total wreck.

in shelter off Netley. From there she was removed to Portsmouth and repaired.

REPAIRS.—For the whole period of the war the work of repairs and upkeep of not only the Company's steamers, but of those entrusted to the management of the Company by the Government, was carried out by the Company. The Company's Work Department, moreover, was called upon for a period to carry out the repairs of four Italian hospital ships and other vessels.

STEVEDORING.—At the request of the Admiralty, the Company dealt with the whole of the stevedoring of war munitions in Southampton docks during the period March 5th to June 15th, 1917, when the following were shipped, in 610 steamers:—77,056 horses; 5,970 guns; lorries and other vehicles, 469,153 deadweight tons. It is interesting to note that the largest and record shipments, in a given period, of hay, stores, munitions, etc., were all made during the operations of the Union-Castle Company.

MUNITIONS.—In July, 1915, the Company organised a Branch Munition Committee, under the Management Board of the West of England Munitions Committee. The various engineering and motor-car works of the district under the Company's management, manufactured, in three and a half years, about 270,000 18-pounder H.E. shells, besides a great quantity of small munitions. In October, 1915, the Company itself undertook the manufacture of 18-pounder H.E. shells, and produced a great number of these.

VICTUALLING.—The Company's Victualling Department, in addition to supplying the Company's ships, carried out the victualling of other vessels—among others the French hospital ships *Formosa*, *Valdroia*, and *Salta*, and the four Italian hospital ships *Re d'Italia*, *Regina d'Italia*, *Brasile*, and *Italia*.

ELECTRICAL WORK.—Much of the electrical work connected with the fitting out of ships was entrusted to the Union-Castle Company by the Government. This work included the special illumination required for the hospital ships. This was of a most elaborate nature, involving the fitting of special green lights practically along the whole length of a ship on either side, and the fitting of large red crosses on each side of the

The *Glenart Castle* was mined or torpedoed on two occasions. On the second occasion she was lost, sinking in five minutes—a description of which disaster will be given later. On the first occasion she was successfully salvaged. She was struck, off the Owers, while carrying wounded from Havre to Southampton. No lives were lost. All on board were safely transferred to boats, and the ship, in a sinking condition, was taken in tow, was brought into the dry dock at Portsmouth just as she was about to go down, and was salvaged. In almost similar circumstances the hospital ship *Gloucester Castle*, after having been mined or torpedoed in the Channel, was towed in, beached and salvaged. As in the case of the *Glenart Castle* the wounded were quickly and safely removed, thanks to the prompt action of captains and crews and the assistance given by patrol boats and tugs.

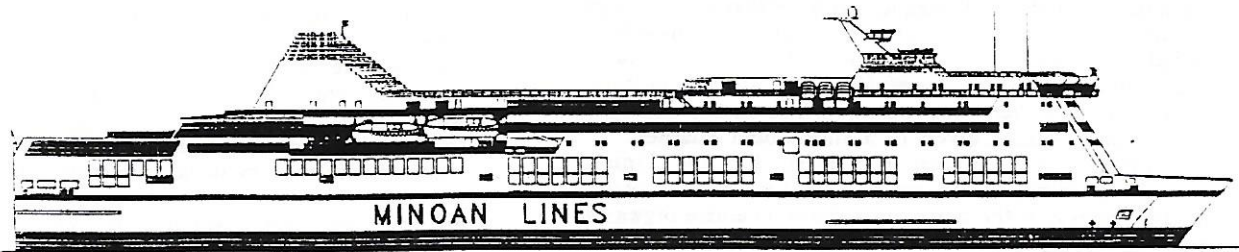
A very difficult undertaking was the salvaging of the *Corrie Castle*. She was torpedoed off St. Catherine's Point, and was beached on the Horse Tail Bank. In spite of adverse winds and tides, rough seas, and other almost insuperable difficulties, she was eventually got off the exposed position in which she lay and was beached.

ship. The design of these red crosses was the result of extensive experiments made by the Company. The Company not only fitted these lights to its own ships but at the request of the Government supplied them in considerable numbers to other hospital ships, including the previously mentioned four Italian hospital ships and the Australian Government hospital ship *Karoola*. The electrical department was also almost continuously employed in fitting of convoy lights, hospital ward lights, navigation lighting, etc., in connection with the shipping using the port of Southampton during the war.

FREIGHT DEPARTMENT.—The Company acted as general agents for various ships using Southampton. While acting in this capacity it attended to the *S.S. Boorara*, after she had been torpedoed in March, 1918. This ship was brought into Southampton water in sinking condition, and was beached off Netley. For about six months the Company employed a special staff to deal with her cargo of over 11,000 tons and the large number of pedigree horses and cattle which she was also carrying. The Company conveyed the animals by barge to the docks, reconditioned the cargo, reshipped part of it to Australia, and despatched the remainder to London for disposal.

* * * * *

In addition to the variety of work indicated above the Union-Castle Company did a great deal more for the Government during the war. For example, the Company designed, made and kept efficient, special constructed floating fenders, 20 feet in length, and coir moorings for the use of hospital ships at Havre, and fitted the Admiralty tugs at Southampton with special bow fenders and side fenders. In short the Company's great organisation was working at high pressure throughout the war. The Government has frequently expressed its appreciation of the help thus afforded in all sorts of emergencies.



Profile of the two new 24-knot passenger/vehicle ferries for Minoan Lines, which are to be built to a Nordvestconsult design at Fosen Mek Verksteder.

Nordvestconsult designs for new Greek and British ferries

ONE happy spin-off for the marine industry from the unfortunate troubles in the former Yugoslavia has been intense interest in new ferries to run between ports in Italy and Greece, and thus bypass the traditional overland route not only to Greece but on to Turkey and Middle East countries. On our News Review pages this month is reported a recent contract from Attica Enterprises (Panagopoulos group) at Schichau Seebeckwerft in Germany for two 23,000gt ferries to run between Ancona and Patras, but now comes news of a second significant order. This has been placed at the Norwegian yard, Fosen Mek Verksteder, of Rissa, and comprises two 6,300dwt ro-ro passenger/vehicle ferries for Minoan Lines, again intended to sail between Ancona and Patras.

These latter vessels will be built to a totally new design, completed within a very short lead time by the Alesund-based naval architectural and marine engineering consultancy Nordvestconsult A/S, using its Autocad and Napa software. This company, which tends to specialise in both fishing vessels and ro-ro designs, has worked with Fosen for many years; its portfolio includes the DB Turkish Cargo Lines' ship *Kaptan Burhanettin Isin* and the Stena derivative *Stena Challenger* (*The Naval Architect* July/August 1991, page E329), also United Shipping's *Hannö*, described in our May 1991 issue, page E231.

An important feature of the new 127m long Greek design is its high service speed of 24 knots from a 42,000bhp (30,870kW) power plant comprising quadruple MAN

B&W medium-speed engines driving twin cp propellers. A shaft alternator will be driven off each gearbox, and there will be three auxiliary diesel-alternators. As is common at Fosen, fabrication of the hull has been subcontracted out – in this case to Bruces, at Landskrona, Sweden; this policy may change in future as Fosen is planning a new hull construction site of its own close to Rissa. The Minoan hull (which will be strengthened to Det norske Veritas Ice 1B standards with an eye to second-hand value) has been tanktested at Marintek, Trondheim and will be built for short international voyages. The classification society will also carry out a noise and vibration study.

Amenities will be provided for 1,500 passengers plus 2,250 lane-metres of vehicle space on three decks. Drive-through access will be featured with both bow and stern ramps, and the lifesaving gear will include both lifeboats and escape chutes. Fin stabilisers will be fitted, and a high level of manoeuvring efficiency will be achieved by the specification of two 1,500kW both thrusters and flap rudders. Delivery of the first ship is planned for June 1995 with the second following in November or December 1996.

New ferry for Commodore

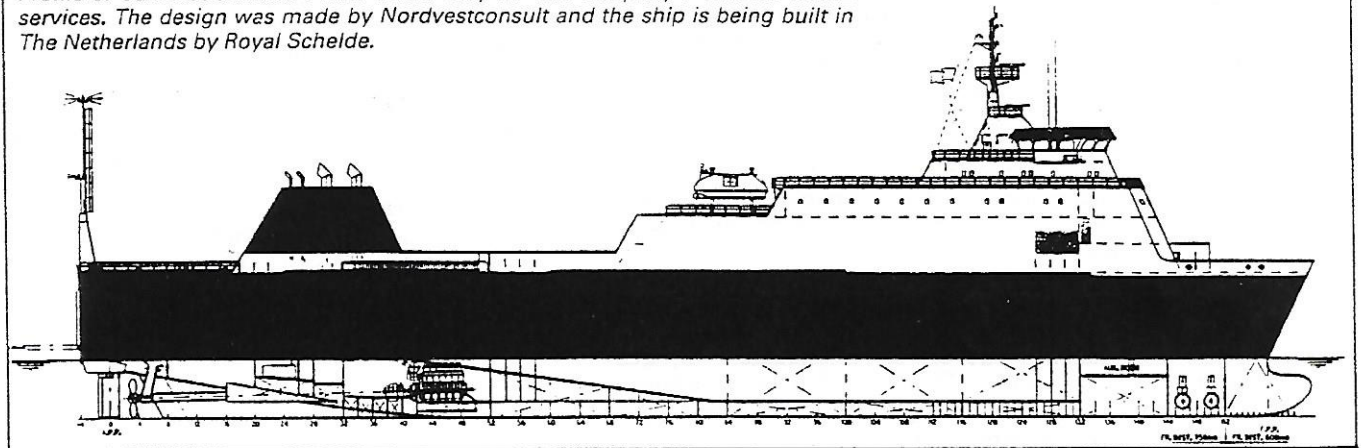
Nordvestconsult's second design, for Commodore Line's Channel Island services, is based on a totally different set of parameters. This 5,250dwt ship, which has been a coup for the Dutch yard of Royal Schelde, is intended for the operator's

trailer routes from England (but will be completed for worldwide service) and is specially conceived to overcome difficult tidal and wind conditions in the Channel Islands and for good manoeuvring capabilities in restricted harbours. Accommodation is only provided for 12 drivers. Three cargo decks (the top one semi-open) accessed by a stern ramp and fixed internal ramps (with a guillotine door at the base of the upper deck ramp) will offer space for 1,250 lane-metres of rolling freight, as well as containers on the main and upper levels.

The hull has been tanktested by Marin in The Netherlands for a service speed of 18 knots, with propulsion power provided by twin 4,300kW MaK 552-type medium-speed diesel engines. These will drive cp propellers as well as 750kW alternators off the gearboxes. Auxiliary power will come from two similar-sized diesel-alternators. Flap rudders and two 600kW bow thrusters should ensure good manoeuvring.

A third interesting design in recent months from Nordvestconsult is that for a pair of 20-knot feeder vehicle carriers ordered from the Brattvaag yard in Norway by United European Car Carriers (NYK/Wallenius). These 120m long ships are intended for North Sea service and will each be able to carry 900 cars; ice strengthening to Det norske Veritas 1C standards will be included. Meanwhile, Nordvestconsult sees an optimistic future ahead, especially with larger classes of ro-ro ferry of 160m-170m and upwards, in particular designed for Baltic and Mediterranean service. ①

Profile of Commodore Line's new trailer ferry for this company's Channel Island services. The design was made by Nordvestconsult and the ship is being built in The Netherlands by Royal Schelde.



VISIT TO THE PRESERVED TUG TENDER CALSHOT.

On a cold and bitter Saturday in November of last year, a small party of members from the branch, visited the tug / tender CALSHOT, she was berthed at the Southampton Council warf at Northam. We were guided about the ship by Mr Alastair Arnott, Curator Of Collections, Southampton City Heritage, as I stepped on to the original after decks, I could still picture the scene, just a few years ago, whilst I was stood on duty as a Policeman in the Southampton Docks, watching the last Calshot coming in alongside the ocean dock, to unload her passengers from the Nieuw Amsterdam, Statendam, and other liners that used to make use of the tug tenders, to ferry her passengers to and from the anchorages in Cowes Roads.

On the after deck there is evidence of the Calshots reconstruction during her life, at one time there was a companion ladder leading down to the tourist class lounge, all that is left is a trace of newer decking. there is now only one of the two towing arches that used to span the decks, the capstan and bollards still remain. making our way along the shelter decks, up towards the bow, of which originally the shelter deck was open, we looked in to the boiler spaces, and the galley, one of the boilers is still in location. Having made our way up to the boat deck, the two original lifeboats are in the councils store awaiting repair, we were shown much evidence of restoration on the chartroom below the bridge, all of the original deck is being replaced with new steel decking, above was the bridge, of which still boasts an original wheel and binacle. The funnel is as you all know, not the original configuration, it was shortened whist in service in Ireland after having been converted to a motor vessel. The davits to the two 20' lifeboats still remain, but the main mast and foremast are no longer there, perhaps these will be replaced as time and money become available. Looking down from the boat deck, one can see the anchor windlass, and the mooring bollards. Making our way down through the decks we next visited the 1st Class lounge, and to the next deck the bar and refreshment room, these are in a very good state although having been refurbished over the years, they look as they would have done when she first built. The engine room was next on the tour, of course now being a diesel engined ship with twin dutch built engines, the E/R space was very clean, with a row of brand new batteries for starting. making our way back aft we next visited the steering gear and the tourist lounge, where there is a display of photographs of Calshot through the years. A visit was also made to the crews cabins and mess decks,

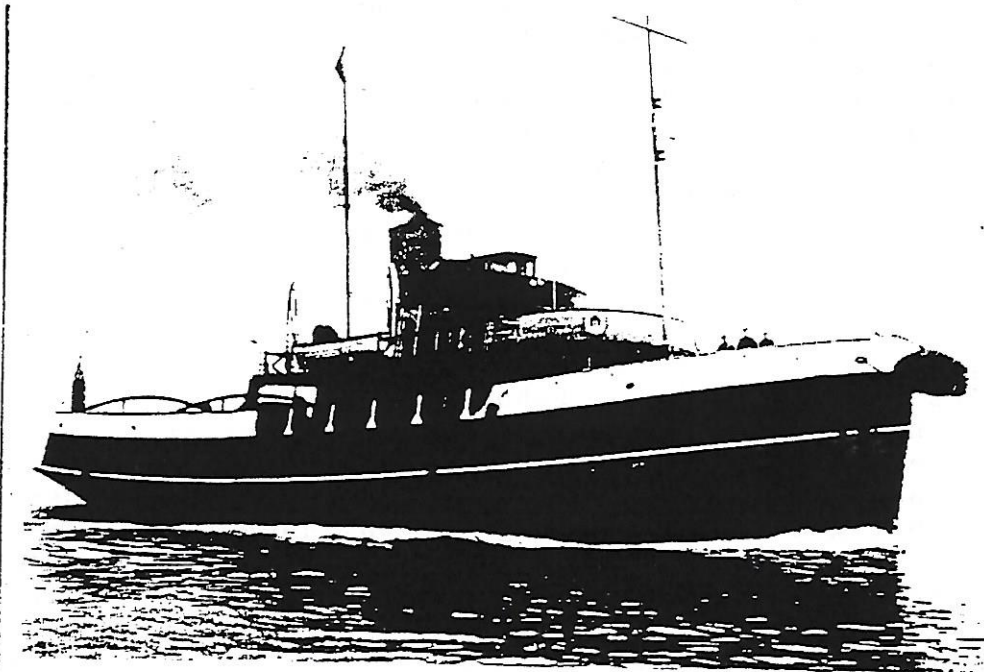
Contrary to some believe, the Calshot is very much alive and in some state of renovation, if you feel you can lend a hand in this project, please call Alastair on Southampton 0703 225905, I am sure he will be pleased to hear from you.

Doug Toogood, Press and Publicity,
Southampton Branch.

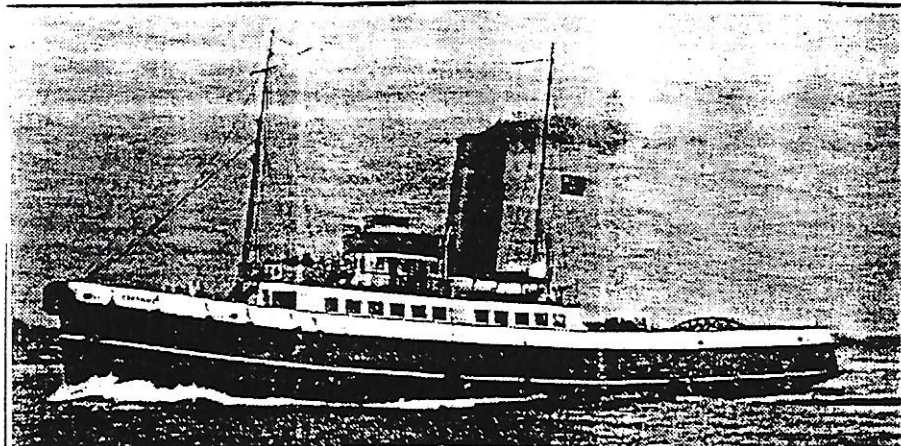
TSS T/T CALSHOT.

Launched 4th November 1929, by John I. Thornycroft, Woolston, Southampton. Completed Jan 1930. For the Southampton, Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Company. 684 tons gross, 269 tons nett, 147'x33.1' Twin screw triple expansion engines, by the builders, 1,500ihp. cert for 566 pass, as well as tender work, she was used on excursion work on the Ryde to Southampton service. During the second world war, the Calshot saw service for the Admiralty in Scapa Flow.

In 1942 she tendered the queens on the Clyde and then returned home to take part in the D Day operations. Returning to her peace time role in 1946, she was then sold in 1964, to Port & Liner Services in Ireland, Renamed Galway Bay, She served as a tender and also did excursion work. In 1971 she was sold to Galway Ferries, and operated a ferry service from Galway to Aran, Finally she was sold to Southampton City Council, to be preserved as a museum ship alongside the proposed new maritime museum. Much restoration has taken place, and so to in the future.

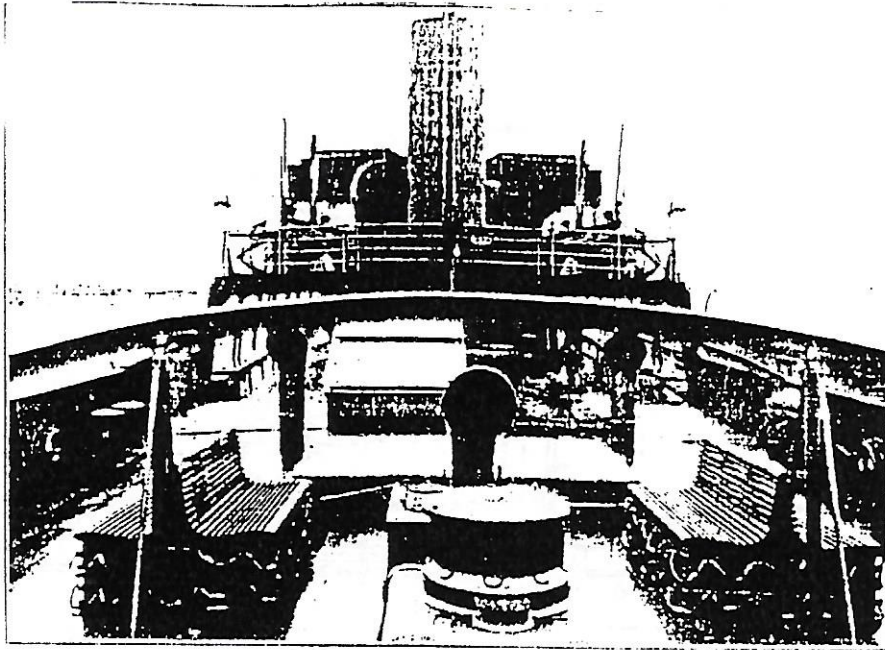


● The Calshot as she appeared shortly after her launch over 60 years ago.

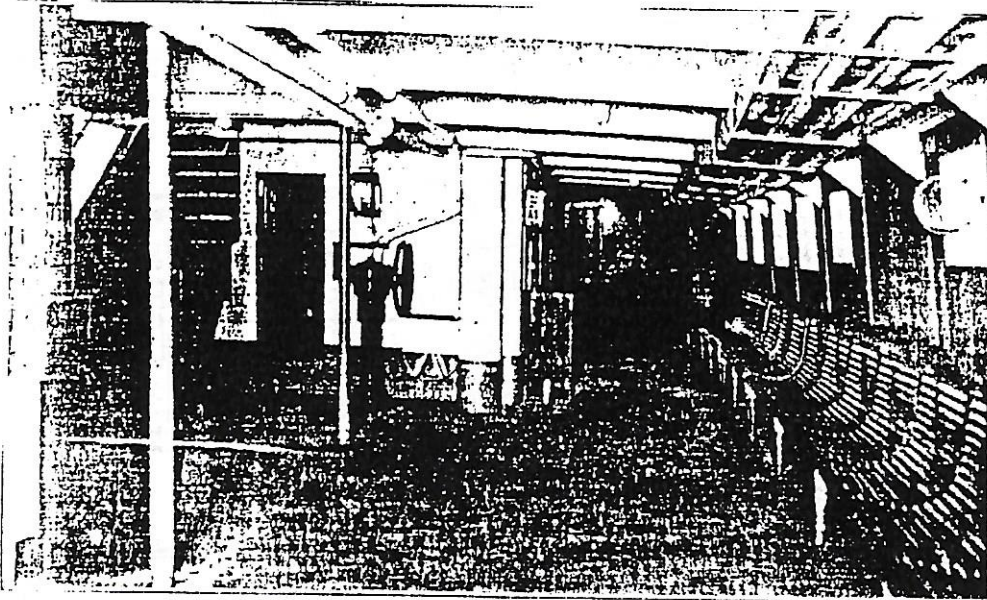


Built and Engined by John I. Thornycroft & Co. Ltd., Woolston, Southampton, for the Southampton, Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.

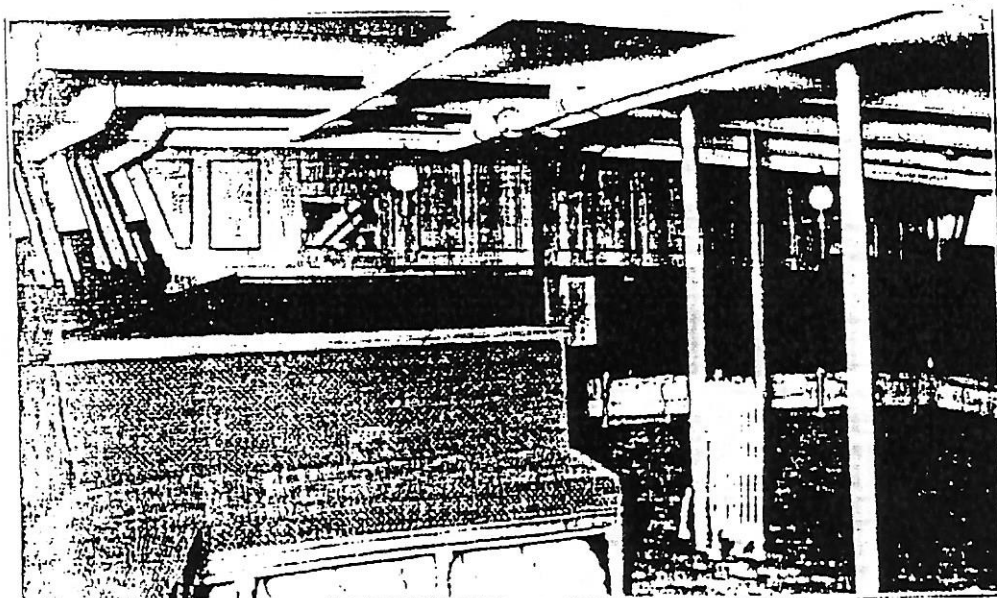
TUG AND PASSENGER TENDER "CALSHOT."



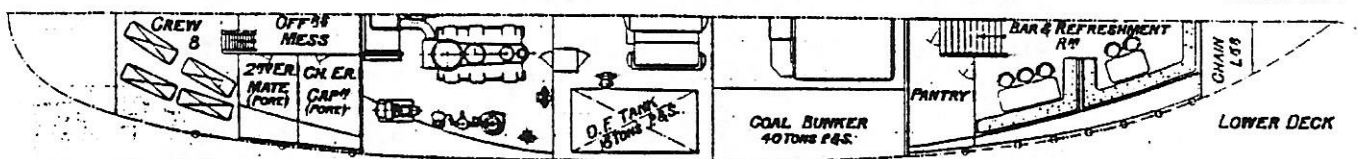
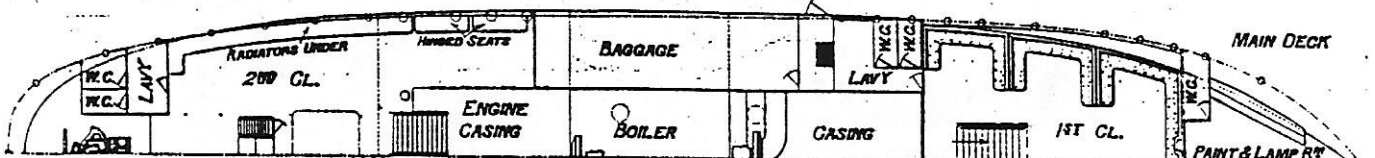
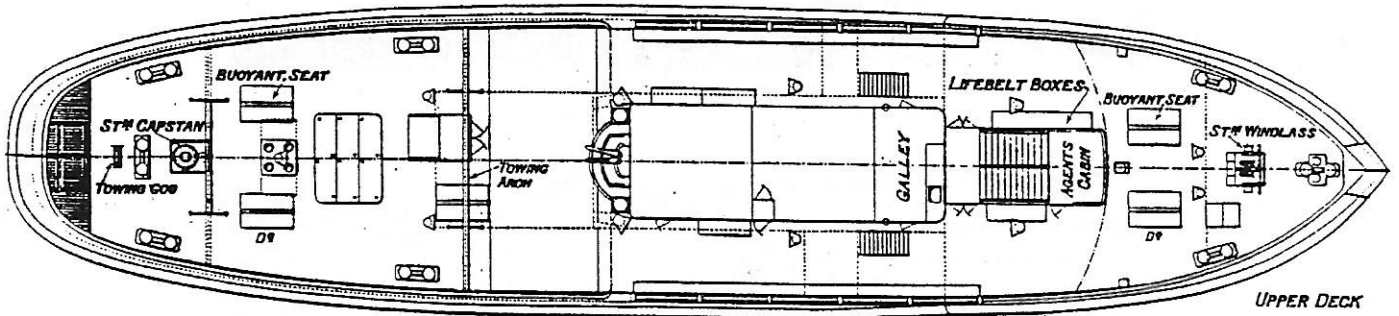
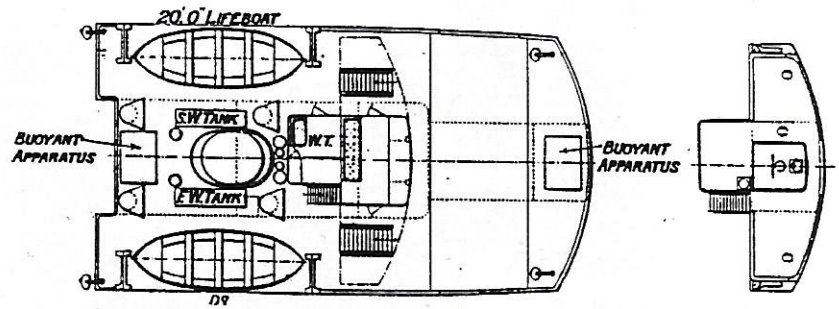
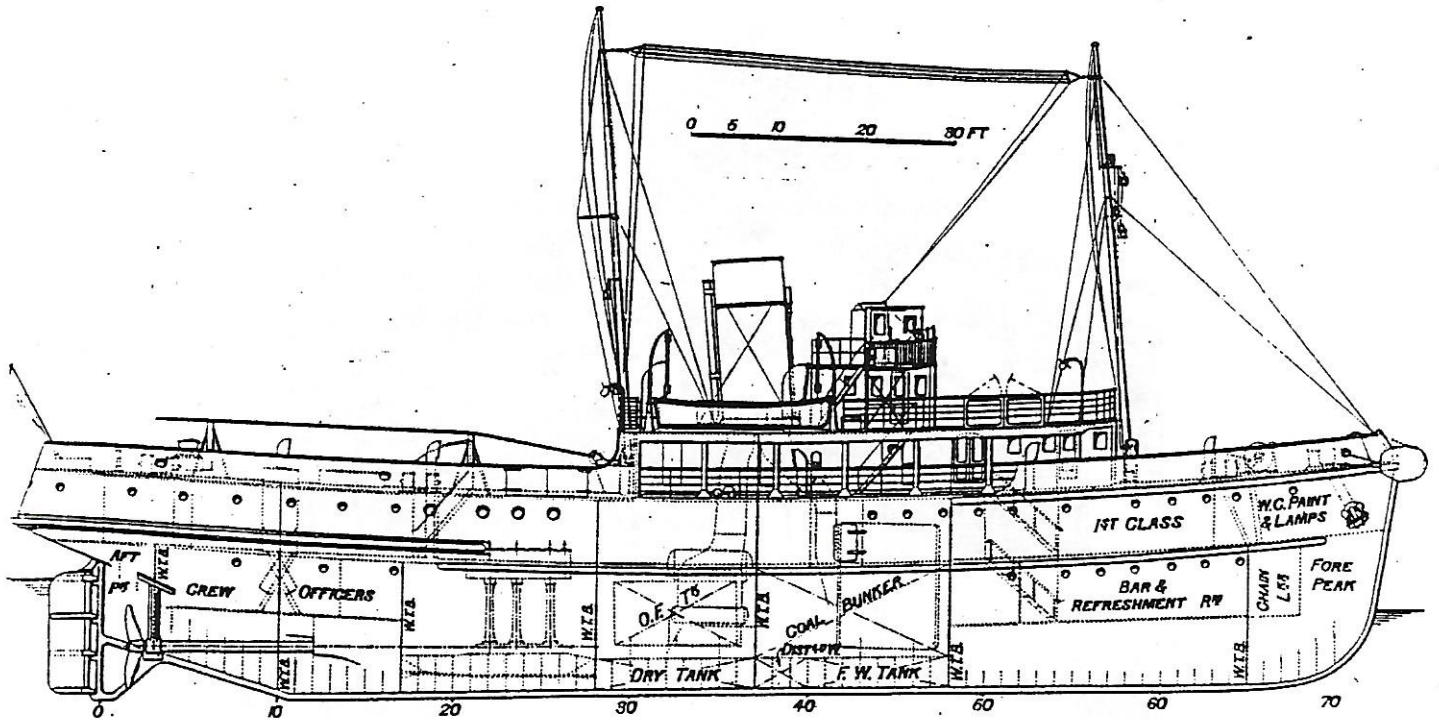
Deck View on the "Calshot," looking Forward.



Second-Class Passenger and Baggage Space on the Main Deck, looking forward.



First-Class Saloon on the Main Deck, forward.



Twin-Screw Tug and Passenger Tender "Calshot." Built and Engined by John I. Thornycroft & Co. Ltd., at Woolston, Southampton, for the Southampton, Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. Ltd.



PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT
THE RECENT BRANCH
EXHIBITION OF SOUTHAMPTON
HISTORY.

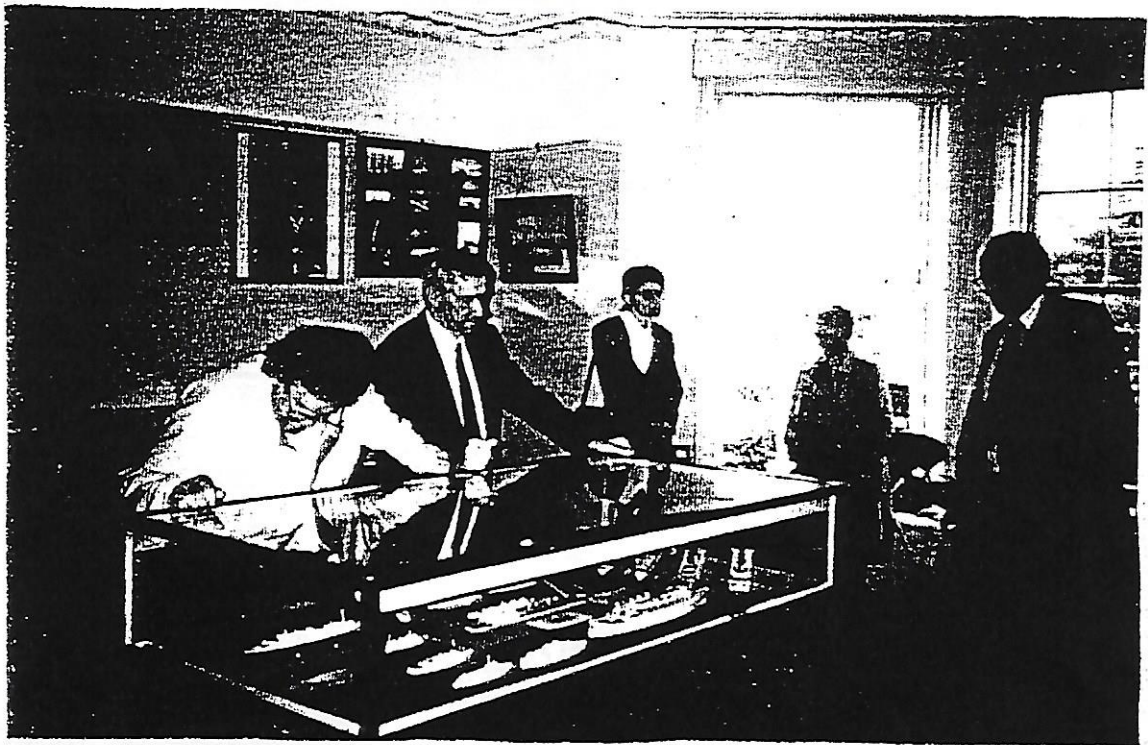
An example of Merchant
Navy uniforms.



Various exhibits at
Tudor House



A superb model of U.S. "SOVEREIGN" kindly loaned by B.F. Marine.



John Grayson and the Chairman study the contents of the cabinet. Thanks to Doug Hoogood and his helpers for making this exhibition so successful.