THE PLA MONTHLY

MAGAZINE OF THE PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY

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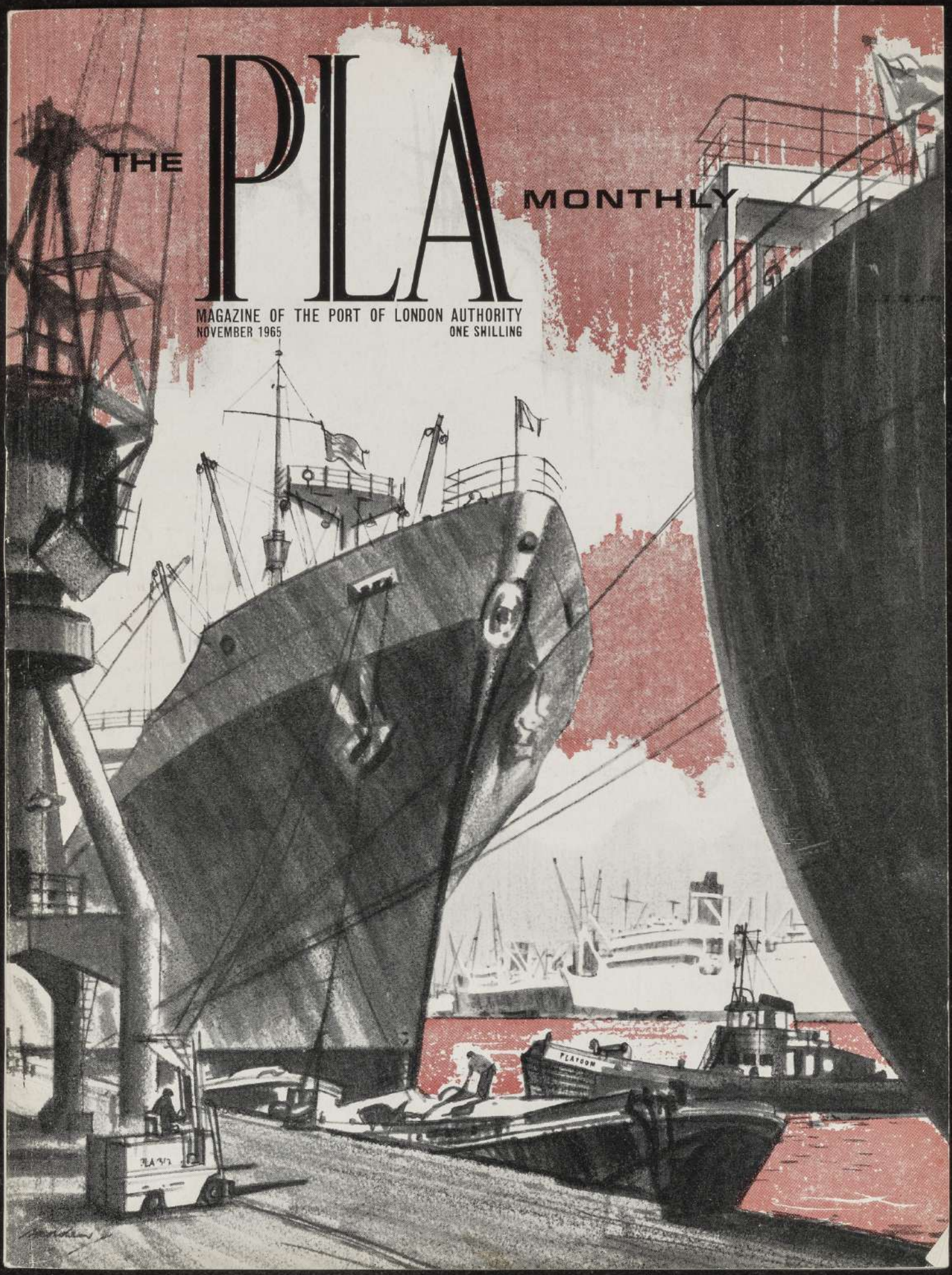

THE PLA MONTHLY

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PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY

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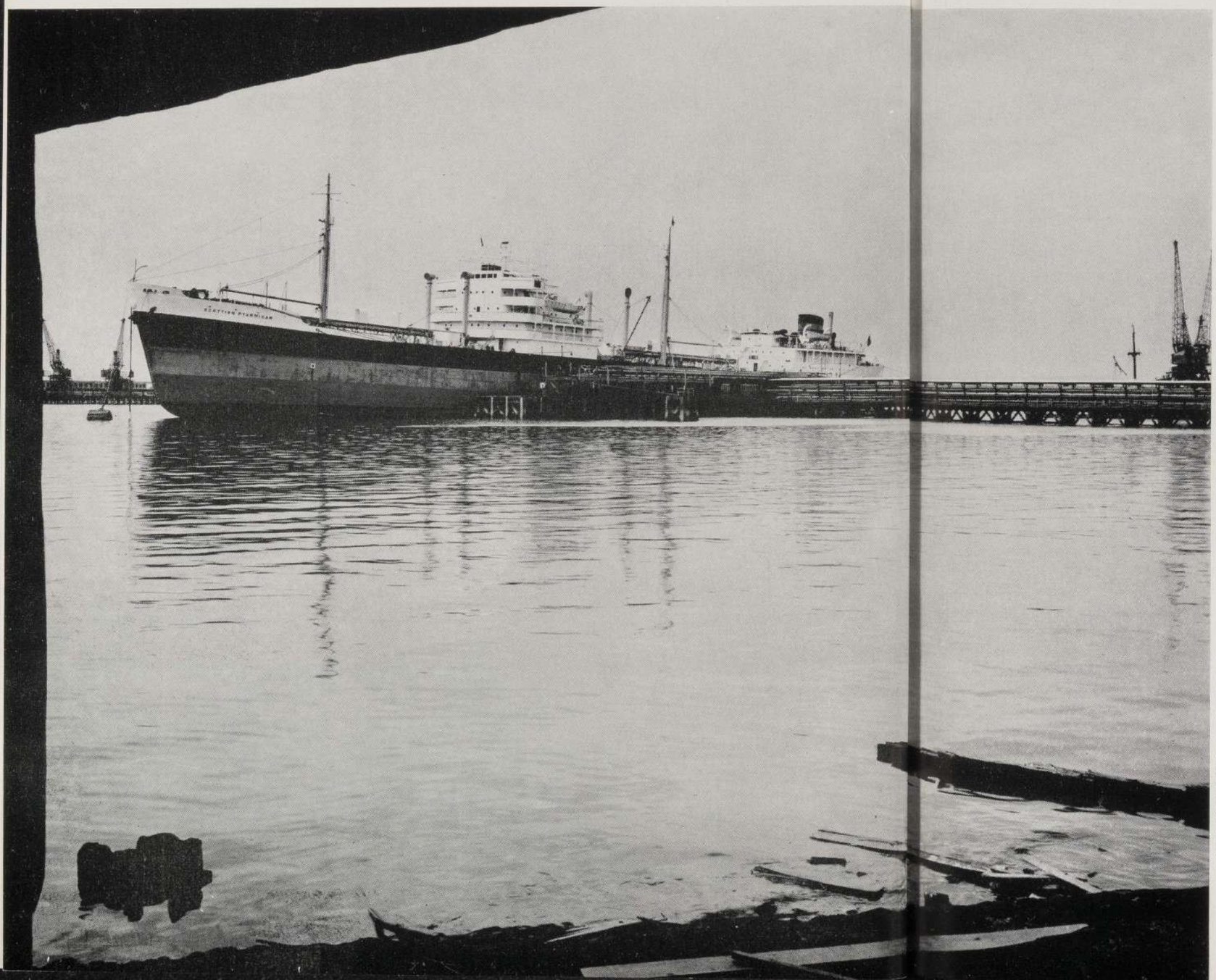
Purfleet: 800 Years of Industrial Development

By G. W. Howe



Today, Purfleet means oil. Over one-and-a-half million tons of petroleum products come to Purfleet each year. Here, an ocean-going tanker is discharging at the Shell-Mex and B.P. Installation at Purfleet

Photo: Shell

FOR many hundreds of years the marshy banks of the lower Thames, especially the northern shore, were used for little else but sheep grazing. Even at the opening of the present century there was little industrial development in the area, though the special needs of the cement and paper-making industries for water transport, and the safety regulations governing the oil installations, had created notable exceptions.

But the pressure of an ever-expanding metropolis, and modern techniques applied to land drainage and to building, have made it both necessary and possible to develop areas of marshy land which have hitherto been useless.

An exception to the general pattern of wind-swept, desolate marshland is Purfleet, 17 miles below London Bridge. Here the chalk of Kent outcrops on the northern shore, to provide the first high ground east of London on that bank of the river.

A slanderous story persists that Purfleet did not have a name until 1588. In that year, faced with the immediate threat of the Spanish Armada, it is said that Queen Elizabeth I climbed a local hill, the better to see some units of her fleet as they lay in the river. Overcome by what came into view, the Queen exclaimed: "Oh, my poor fleet!" and the name is alleged to have been adopted for the neighbouring hamlet. An alternative suggestion is that Her Majesty, having climbed that particular hill, very definitely uttered the heart-cry: "Oh, my poor feet!"

Happily, both versions can be dismissed as fabrications. The name of Purfleet has existed since the 12th Century at the latest, and is of the same derivation as all the other "fleets" in the Thames Estuary —Northfleet, Southfleet, Benfleet, Gunfleet, where the suffix means a small harbour or inlet.

The presence of chalk at Purfleet led to the early establishment of a chalk quarrying industry. Much of the chalk went to farmers for spreading on the heavy clay of the Essex hinterland. Later, small boats, normally engaged on inshore fishing, came from as far distant as Harwich to collect chalk in the off-season. Bigger ships loaded chalk both as cargo and ballast, and in the late 17th Century a local tradesman issued a token coin which on one face bore a representation of a lime kiln.

The first railroad in Essex was laid at Purfleet to carry the trucks of chalk from the workings to the riverside and the waiting ships. Miss Deborah Coates, writing in 1812, described how "The chalk is got into the vessels much more easily than they used to do, by having small ridges of iron called

rail-roads, by which means one horse can draw three times as much as it could without the rail".

Chalk quarrying is still a major undertaking, a very important ancillary to the great cement industry of the Estuary.

Flooding has always been a considerable menace on the lower-lying parts of the Thames Estuary, and the chalk cliffs at Purfleet provided but small relief to an otherwise vulnerable river frontage. In the late 16th Century the lessor of the Purfleet chalk cliffs was obliged to deliver a definite tonnage of chalk between April and June each year for the strengthening of the sea-walls. At the same period the tenant of some marshland at Purfleet had to maintain the sea-wall as a condition of his tenancy, and was permitted to remove a certain quantity of earth from another area to carry out the work. Much earlier even than this, a charge is recorded for "Repair of river wall with reeds at fourpence a perch".

The great flood disaster of 1953 brought very heavy material damage to industrial Purfleet. At a weak spot in the defences the tide broke through, and the inrushing waters spread over many acres behind an otherwise strong and intact sea wall. Several installations were out of action for very long periods.

A particularly massive wall, which took 20 years to complete, prevents any encroachment of the river into the now disused Government Powder Magazine. From the middle of the 18th Century a stock of 50,000 barrels of gunpowder of various grades was maintained at Purfleet in the largest store of its kind in Europe. From the King's Quay it was sent to British naval and military establishments all over the world.

The prevention of the possibility of fire at the magazines was considered to be so vital that, in 1772, a committee of the Royal Society gravely considered the best form of lightning rod for Purfleet. Long and learned were the discussions on the relative merits of balls or points at the tips of the rods. Finally, the King himself (George III) decided that balls would afford the best protection against lightning.

Extensions to the buildings were still being made in 1910, and parts of them were in use for another half century after that. Today, even the magnificent Georgian residence of the Master of the Ordnance is in a dilapidated state, and almost the whole area overgrown with grass and saplings.

The hill which Queen Elizabeth I is said to have climbed is the local Beacon Hill, and one which has a particular interest for seafarers. In 1828 the Corporation of Trinity House leased a piece of land at the summit on which to build a lighthouse within easy reach of London. The purpose of the Purfleet light was to test the many new types of lamps and reflectors then being invented, as well as the relative lighting values of the different kinds of oil available. It should be remembered that, only a very few years before the Purfleet light was

Left: Beacon Hill, Purfleet, as it was in 1828 with the experimental Trinity House lighthouse, and as it is today

Right: Remains of the King's Quay at the Government Powder Magazine at Purfleet, with part of the massive sea wall which took 20 years to build

Below: The Royal Hotel, Purfleet, a landmark to generations of Thames users. The balcony affords a superb view of the river traffic in Long Reach

Photos: Howe

established, lighthouses were still in service in which the warning "light" was provided by an open coal fire. The lighthouse was a standard 19th Century shore type, complete with living quarters, although it was not continuously occupied, nor used as a lighthouse proper.

In May 1829 experiments were carried out with Argand burners and reflectors, and the lights observed from the Trinity House Buoy Wharf at Blackwall, a feat which emphasises the then unencumbered condition of the intervening miles of riverside. For some years comparative experiments with lamps, reflectors and illuminants continued, but the necessity for them decreased, and Purfleet lighthouse fell into disuse during the 1870's, though parts of the building survived until 1925.

A riverside landmark which has been known to generations of Thamesmen is the Royal Purfleet Hotel. Standing right on the riverside, its wide balconies overlooking Long Reach and Erith Rands, it is a grand 'vantage point from which to view the ever-changing panorama of London River. In Victorian times the hotel was a fashionable rendezvous, famous for its whitebait dinners. The "Royal" prefix was adopted about 1870, after the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) had dined there.

The predecessor of the "Royal" was the "Ship Inn", which ceased to function in 1828. But it is probable that an inn had stood on the site for many centuries, because in front of the hotel is the old ferry landing known as the King's Stairs, with a weather-beaten and tide-washed mooring post said to have been in position since 1798. These stairs were brought into use at that time to replace an earlier landing a short distance upstream which had become incorporated in the Government Powder Magazine.

The ferry itself is known to have existed in 1577, and continued to operate into the present century, across the river to another famous waterside inn, the "Long Reach Tavern". Plans for a canal from Dartford (Kent) to the Thames which were drawn up about 1830 made definite provision for a ferry to Purfleet, evidence of the importance attached to the crossing.

But Purfleet does not live on its past. As long ago as 1887 the proximity of the river, with the means of easy transport it provided, led to M. Maurice Cartier of Paris deciding to establish the Thames Paper Works on the marshes. The output consisted largely of newsprint for the London evening papers, of which many more existed than is the case now. The mill was a small one and never a great success, because the type of water available

Left: The King's Stairs at Purfleet, once the terminal of a ferry across to Kent. The mooring post on the right of the steps is said to have been erected in 1798

Above: The badge of the Steam Ship Owners' Coal Association still visible on a row of houses at Purfleet. The name of the cottages commemorates the sub-tropical gardens which flourished there in the 19th Century.

Photos: Howe

was not suitable for the product. The business changed hands several times until the present owners took over in 1902. They concentrated so successfully on the manufacture of packing materials that nowadays any large carton or cardboard container of British goods, for home consumption or for export, is most probably a product of Thames Board Mills. The present factory covers over 20 acres of riverside Purfleet, with its own deep-water wharf for the landing of raw materials.

Here, too, in pleasantly laid-out grounds, is one of the factories of the firm which produces that famous margarine which housewives cannot distinguish from butter!

Prominent on the centre house of a short terrace at Purfleet is a badge showing a steam collier, the letters S.S.O.C.A. Ltd., and the date 1905. The date is that of the construction of the houses, because the Steam Ship Owners Coal Association Ltd. had acquired land along the riverside at Purfleet in 1903. For the discharge of coal from ship the Association built a reinforced concrete jetty, one of the first uses of this material for jetty construction in this country.

In July, 1912, the S.S.O.C.A. became part of William Cory & Son, Ltd. For the next half century the colliers, with the familiar funnel marking of a black diamond on a white ground, came alongside at Purfleet to discharge, mainly into barges. The coal was for ships' bunkers, for London industrial undertakings and for the public utilities of gas and electricity; in 1947 more than a million tons of coal was handled at the Purfleet jetty.

Although "Wm. Cory & Son" and "Coal" have been almost synonymous terms on London River since the middle of the 18th Century, other cargoes were dealt with at Purfleet. In 1950 the Purfleet jetty handled one of the earliest consignments of bulk sugar to arrive in this country, and seven years later the grabs discharged almost 350,000 tons of this commodity.

But the demand for coal was falling rapidly and, at Purfleet as well as elsewhere, oil storage installations were increasing in size, numbers and capacity. In 1961 Wm. Cory & Son, Ltd. leased the Purfleet jetty and wharf to Cory Bros. Ltd., to be used as an oil tanker berth in connection with a new oil storage depot.

A survey showed that the concrete of the jetty, after 60 years use, was "as good as new", and work on the conversion was put in hand. In this connection the P.L.A. was able to give valuable assistance with one of the Port's best-known pieces of equipment. The flow-boom structure for the new oil terminal had been assembled at a wharf at Swanscombe, on the opposite bank of the river and four miles downstream. The P.L.A.'s self-propelled crane *London Titan* was brought into service to lift the ungainly load, carry it upstream, and lower it into position at Purfleet. The equipment included winches, booms and hoses and weighed 56 tons.

Cory Brothers, now a member of the Powell Duffryn Group, and newcomers to Purfleet, were originally colliery owners in South Wales. In 1920 the firm entered the oil business with its own refinery lower down the Estuary at Coryton. The

refinery was later disposed of, but the firm continued to operate in the oil storage and bunkering business. The Purfleet installation, officially opened by the Chairman of the P.L.A. in October, 1962, can accommodate tankers of up to 47,000 tons d.w., and when the site is fully developed the storage capacity will exceed 500,000 water tons.

The story of this and other oil installations at Purfleet is closely linked with the safety regulations for oil cargoes imposed by the Authority and its predecessor, the Thames Conservancy. A century ago, oil, mostly kerosene, was imported in barrels and discharged almost anywhere in the Port. The danger of fire and explosion was very great, and in 1872 the Thames Conservancy prohibited seagoing vessels laden with low flash-point oils from proceeding to the westward of Thameshaven. The westward limit was later confirmed at the Mucking Light, a point where the river starts to narrow rather quickly.

Transport from Thameshaven was in barges and other small vessels, and at many points upstream storage depots were established by the oil companies. Purfleet was sufficiently isolated for comparatively large quantities of the commodity to be stored with a fair degree of safety, and quickly developed as a major site.

All the oil was barrelled when Shell-Mex and B.P. established their Purfleet depot at the turn of the century, and the undertaking then included a cooperage. At one time kerosene was sent from Purfleet to Iceland in barrels.

An earlier Purfleet oil installation, now carrying the familiar name of Esso, was established in 1888, and by the end of the 1914–18 War about 50,000,000 gallons of oil were passing through this terminal annually. Ten times that quantity is handled today.

It had always been the desire of the oil companies to make Purfleet the inward limit for their ocean-going ships, but for many years the authorities were adamant. With the threat of war looming large in 1938, it was doubtless a tactical move for permission to be quietly given for the big oil carriers to come upstream as far as Crayfordness, opposite Purfleet.

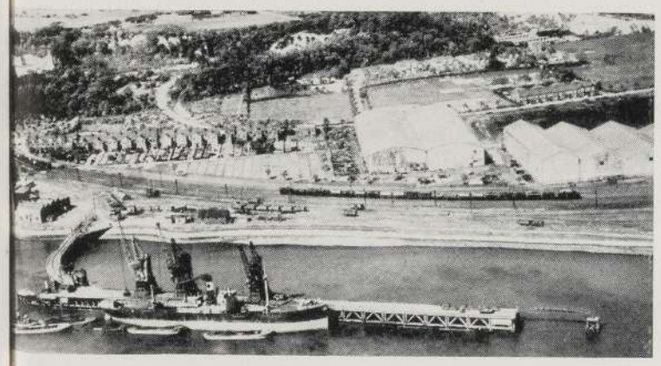
This remains the furthest point upstream to which the oil ships can come. The P.L.A.'s dredged channel gives access for tankers of 26,000 tons d.w., bringing over 1,500,000 tons of petroleum products to Purfleet each year. No refining takes place there; the massive tanks, some of them with an individual capacity of 20,000 water tons, are for storage purposes only. From them, ships are bunkered with marine fuels and lubricants, other and smaller depots further upstream are kept supplied, and they, in turn, fill the road tankers which have become such a familiar sight now that the use of oil for domestic heating is becoming commonplace. Some of the riverside electricity generating stations draw their fuel supplies from the Purfleet tank farms.

The new Purfleet to Dartford tunnel, with its numerous road connections, has made a great difference to distribution from Purfleet, but the river remains the principal medium for the transport of the area's raw materials and products. One wonders whether "poor fleet" would be the reaction if Queen Elizabeth I could but view the busy maritime scene at what was once the tiny haven situated where the Mardyke joins the Thames.

Below: "Cory's" was once synonymous with coal at Purfleet—the Wm. Cory jetty in 1949 with the collier *Corchester* alongside discharging coal to lighters

Right: Today, leased to Cory Bros., Ltd., the jetty handles large quantities of petroleum products and the firm's tank farm can be seen in the picture

Photos: Courtesy of Wm. Cory & Son Ltd.



Upstream and Downstream

By The Ferryman

Photo: P.L.A.

A meeting of the Committee on International Port Development, a committee of The International Association of Ports and Harbours, at the P.L.A. Head Office building recently. In the Chair is Mr. Austin J. Tobin of the Port of New York. On his left are, first, Viscount Simon, Chairman of the Port of London Authority, Sir Arthur Kirby of British Transport Docks Board, and Mr. Terai of the Japanese Embassy. On Mr. Tobin's right are Mr. Posthuma of the Port of Rotterdam, Mr. Gilman and Mr. Lyle King of New York

Aid for Port Development

International co-operation and aid to the developing nations now cover most aspects of life today and the world's major ports are not lagging behind in offering to share their knowledge and experience. This fact was borne out at the first meeting of the Committee on International Port Development, held in London last month at the invitation of Viscount Simon, Chairman of the Port of London Authority.

The Committee, which was set up by the International Association of Ports and Harbours, comprises representatives from Bangkok, Ports of Colombia, New Orleans, Colombo, Melbourne, Tokyo, Monrovia, New York, Rotterdam, London and British Transport Docks. Its purpose is to make available to officials in the developing ports, the experience and technical resources of port planning, management and operations available at ports represented in the I.A.P.H. This co-operation will be offered from one port to another on a direct, immediate and informal basis but the Committee have emphasised that their activities are specifically designed so that they in no way overlap the work of other international organisations, such as the United Nations, or impinge on the functions of private consultants in the field of port operations.

As a result of the London meeting, some 80 ports of the developing nations will be asked, on behalf of 50 major, fully developed ports, if they wish to take advantage of the Committee's programme of international co-operation, either by direct consultation on particular problems or through training of personnel at member ports of the I.A.P.H.

The Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Austin J. Tobin, Executive Director of the Port of New York Authority, pointed out that although many of the ports to whom the enquiry would be addressed have acquired a tradition and experience in port operations greater than that of the so-called "developed" ports, there is nevertheless available in some of the larger ports of both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres a fund of specialised experience in the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of ports that is useful and can be put at the disposal of all who desired it.

These very practical proposals, which have the complete agreement of all the port representatives on the Committee are deserving of a wide response for they could lead to a raising of standards in ports all over the world.

P.L.A. "Does them Proud"

The little girl pushed her brother's pram into the lift and nonchalantly pressed the button to take them to the top of the new Glengall Grove footbridge over Millwall Dock. Completely unaware that only minutes before the Mayor of Tower Hamlets had performed the official opening ceremony, she had already accepted this new way of crossing the dock as a normal part of daily life. She was too young to know or care about the years of discussion, planning and work which preceded its completion, but older inhabitants of the Isle of Dogs are well aware of the circumstances which we described in our September issue, and which culminated with the official opening of this new high level footbridge on September 21st. Had they, in fact, lost their right of way, local people would have been faced with a two-mile journey round the dock for access to the swimming bath on the west and the public health service, library and schools on the east. The Secretary of the Millwall Residents Association, Mr. Bill Willson, summed up their feelings after the ceremony when he told *Ferryman* "The P.L.A. have done us proud".

Before the opening ceremony began the small crowd gathered on the dockside watched the bridge being raised to allow the P.L.A. s.y. *St. Katharine* to pass through, the single bascule span of 113ft. lifting gracefully under the power of its two hydraulic motors. Lowered into position once more, it was ready for inspection by the Mayoral party. It is a novel experience to walk along this high level corridor, the diffused lighting from the frosted glass and the pale green paintwork producing a shimmering, almost submarine effect.

Down to earth once more, P.L.A. Chairman, Lord Simon, spoke of the modern design of the new bridge, successor of a footbridge which would be remembered by many. "It is as much in the interests of the local people as of the P.L.A. that this dock should flourish" he said, "And though the Authority would have been very pleased not to have had to replace the old bridge at all, the case for the citizens of Poplar had been put so ably and convincingly that the result was the provision of this new high level footbridge—a remarkable feat of engineering for which the engineers and all others responsible should be congratulated."

The Mayor, who performed the opening by pressing a switch to raise the bascule section of the bridge, described it as the fruit of many

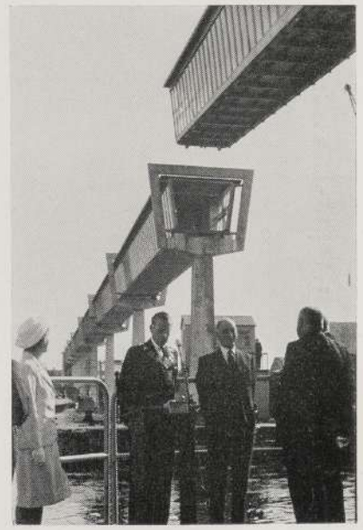


Photo: P.L.A.

The new footbridge at Glengall Grove crossing Millwall Dock, is officially opened by the Mayor of Tower Hamlets. On his left is Lord Simon of the Port of London Authority

Two new patrol craft of the Harbour Service fleet, the new Ray *and* Roding. *Constructed in Holland as part of a big P.L.A. fleet modernisation programme, they feature the efficient Schottel propulsion system*

Photo: Pollard

associations, and said he felt that in spending a quarter of a million pounds on the bridge, the P.L.A. were providing facilities not only for the residents of Tower Hamlets, but also for visitors from overseas who came to see this part of London which they had heard so much about. He mentioned the late Charles King who by his own personal research had established the perpetual right of way over the dock, and to whom the local residents owed much. He referred to certain damage which had been done to the bridge in the short time it had been in use before the official opening and appealed to all users to prevent vandalism.

So this new footbridge is now officially open to the public and long may it remain as an example of the way in which such incompatible interests as the modernisation of the docks and the requirements of the public may be reconciled, with resulting benefits to both sides.

Photo: P.L.A.

The Port of London Authority Stand at the recent Export Services Exhibition. The stand, designed by City Display, Ltd., excited great interest and much favourable comment

Expertise for Exporters

The need for a thoroughly professional approach to the business of exporting was stressed by the Prime Minister in a message to the first Export Services Exhibition held recently at Olympia. And this was the central theme of the exhibition which demonstrated the comprehensive services offered to exporters by experts in many fields. A manufacturer, venturing into the export market for the first time, was able, at Olympia, to get advice from the 70 specialist exhibitors on every facet of the business, including market research, finance, packaging, documentation and transportation, and to attend the daily conferences which covered most aspects of this vitally important subject.

The Board of Trade was a prominent exhibitor and featured the many Government Services available to exporters, including its Exports Credit Guarantee Department and the Export Intelligence Service whereby an enquirer, by dialling CITy 9633 (or the Board's regional offices), can obtain information on overseas markets for his products, names of likely agents, tariff information and a host of other useful facts.

Having made his decision to enter the export field, the visitor to Olympia would have found valuable advice available from the many

packaging firms whose displays ranged from the smallest cardboard cartons to the largest steel containers, while representatives of the Banks and Finance Houses were on the spot to explain their specialist services to exporters.

The stands of the various shipping and air freight companies featured the world-wide services available from this country and shipping agents were on hand to describe their part in the export trade.

The small manufacturer, timidly contemplating the intricacies of export documentation and wondering if it was worth his while to export at all, would have been relieved to learn that several organisations provide a complete service to the exporter and handle exports from works to point of delivery, covering insurance, packaging, shipping and all the incidental processes.

Some ingenious working models were on display, notably that of the Proprietors of Hays Wharf Limited, whose model in the round depicted a busy scene with lorries and railway trucks collecting exports from the end of a production line and transporting them to a packaging works for preservation, processing and packing, and storage while awaiting shipment by sea, rail, road or air.

A model was also a feature of the stand of the Port of London Authority and many interested spectators gathered to trace the course of the River Thames through the Port of London, which accounts for the handling of one third of Britain's exports. The P.L.A. Trade Promotion Officer was in attendance to point out to enquirers the many advantages of shipping through Britain's largest port.

Exhibitors generally seemed to be agreed on the value of the show, some expressing the opinion that it was something that had needed doing for a long time. We hope that by publicising the fact that there are experts available in every sector of the business the exhibition will have gone some way towards taking the amateurism out of exporting.

The "Little America's Cup"

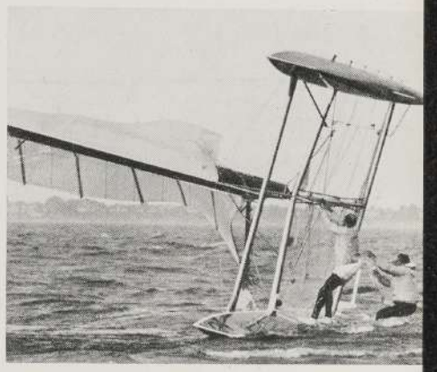
Thrills and spills were the order of the day when the last race of the 1965 series for the International Catamaran Challenge Trophy, familiarly known as "The Little America's Cup" was sailed at Thorpe Bay towards the end of September. The races between the British *Emma Hamilton*, helmed by her builder, Reg White, and crewed by John Osborn, and the Australian challenger, *Quest II*, sailed by Lindsay Cunningham, her co-designer, and John Buzaglo, were as close fought and exciting as one could hope to see.

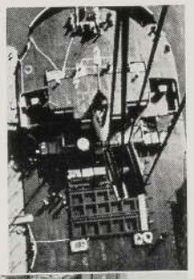
With honours even on the final day, fate snatched the trophy from the Australian team when it seemed that nothing could prevent their winning. A vicious squall capsized *Quest II* within sight of victory, allowing the Britons to close the one minute gap and sail on to win.

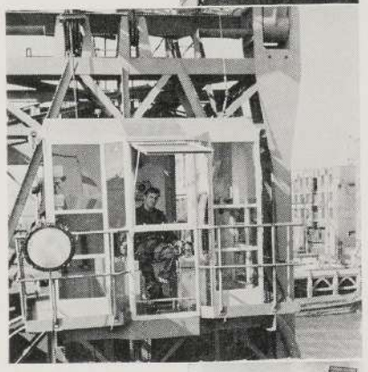
The Catamaran race series began in 1961 when the British *Hellcat II* accepted an invitation from the Sea Cliff Yacht Club of Long Island, New York, and became the first holder of the trophy by outsailing the Californian *Wildcat*. The return match, held at Thorpe Bay the following year, resulted in another win for Britain, the first *Hellcat* defeating her American challenger, *Beverly*. In 1963 Australia entered the lists with a challenge by *Quest* which was taken up by *Hellcat IIIS* who defeated her opponents by four races to nil, and 1964 saw a modified Hellcat IIIS, *Emma Hamilton*, sailing and winning a close-fought series against the American *Sea Lion*. This year's match with Australia bears out the claim that catamaran racing is one of the finest spectator sports and we look forward to next year's races which are likely to be against an American team.

Ruin of a race. A squall upsets Quest II, *the Australian challenger, winning up to this moment, during the Catamaran Challenge Trophy race at Thorpe Bay recently*

Photo: Lacey





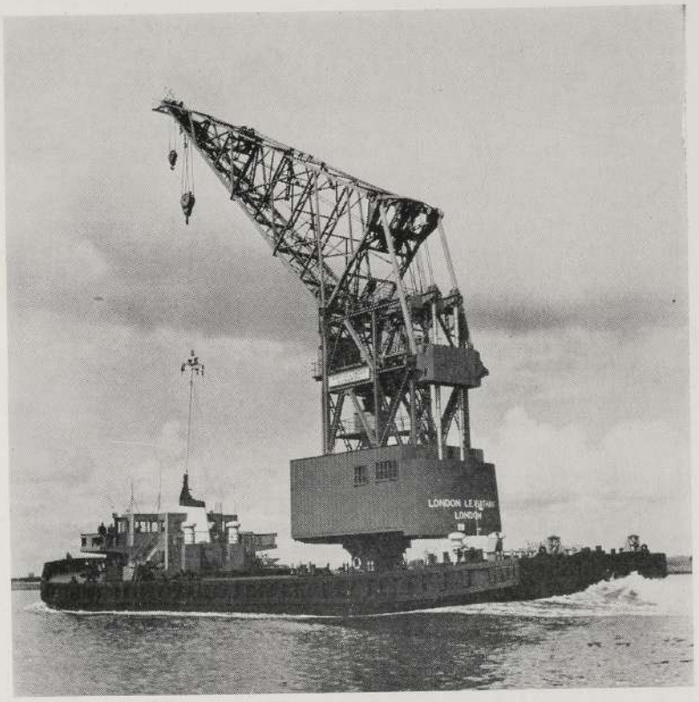


Top right. *The P.L.A.'s new 60-ton floating crane, the* London Leviathan, *which has just been commissioned. She is a sister vessel to the* London Samson *which came into service in 1963. The* London Leviathan's *first lift on the Thames was a Stothert and Pitt portal crane purchased by Crown Wharf, Poplar, from Jason Shipping Company. The lift, 47½ tons, was well within the 60-ton capacity of the* London Leviathan

Photo: Holland Cranes

Top left: *Looking down from the top of the jib of the new* London Leviathan. Bottom: *Looking up at the main hoist block. In the middle the crane driver takes a balanced view of things*

Photos: Cameron



"Canst Thou Draw Out Leviathan With An Hook?"

The vast creature first known as a leviathan, an aquatic monster of indeterminate nature, first appears in literature in the Book of Job whence comes the quotation at the top of this paragraph. Since that time it has come to mean, first, any aquatic creature or thing of tremendous size and then, metaphorically, anything of enormous size, power or influence. It is in this latter sense that Thomas Hobbes, celebrated English philosopher, uses it in the title of his most famous work *Leviathan, or the Matter, Power and Form of the Commonwealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil*", published in 1651. The doctrine of this work, a thesis which we would regard as a totalitarian one nowadays, was that the power of the state (the leviathan) as against the individual was absolute and unassailable.

The name of the P.L.A.'s new floating crane, *London Leviathan*, is then, Hebrew in origin with literary and political overtones. As to absolute and unassailable power, her 60-ton capacity represents no mean strength. She is not the first floating crane in the Authority's fleet to have the name. The first *London Leviathan*, now gone to the breakers, was remarkable in her day too. The Willans engine and pump with which she was fitted have, in fact, gone to the Department of Science and Industry of the City Museum of Birmingham as outstanding examples of their kind. This *Leviathan's* capacity was 50 tons and one of her last melancholy tasks, before being scrapped herself, was to take old hydraulic cranes, weighing 49 tons, to the scrap yard. And so, after lending her aid to the modernisation of the Port of London, she went the way of earlier, mystical, leviathans.

Her successor is a sister craft to the *London Samson*, delivered in September, 1963. Experience with this craft showed that the design was a highly successful one, resulting in a first class floating crane. When a second crane was wanted, therefore, there was no reason to do other than order another of the same design. This was the *London Leviathan* which made her debut at Tower Pier in September this year. Both cranes were constructed by Messrs I. H. C., Holland, the *London Leviathan* being actually built by their partners, Messrs Verschure, Amsterdam. As with the *London Samson*, a great deal of the equipment is of U.K. manufacture, Rolls Royce supplying the main engines, A.E.I. the electrical equipment, and Allen West, Ltd., supplying the crane control equipment. Propulsion of the cranes is by Voith Schneider units, one at the bow and one at the stern of each craft giving them the very high degree of manoeuvrability desirable in the enclosed dock systems. They are capable of moving under their own power in all weather conditions up to Beaufort force 7 and have sufficient turn of speed to travel in reasonable time between the up-river docks and Tilbury at all states of the tide.

These highly efficient craft are the result of close co-operation between the P.L.A.'s engineering staff and the builders. The specification was, of course, the work of the P.L.A. engineers.

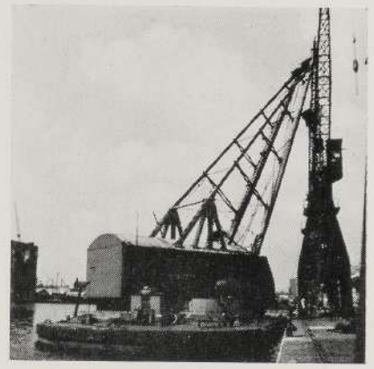


Photo: Garratty

The old Leviathan *now broken up lends a hand in modernising the port, before going to scrap herself, by taking away old quay cranes to the scrapyard. Among the interesting lifts by the old* Leviathan *was the section of* Turbinia, *the first turbine-engined craft, brought to London in 1928 for display at the Science Museum*

Photo: Pollard

Leaving London River for the last time, but not, fortunately, for scrap is the Medway Queen, *last of the London River paddlers. The* Medway Queen *was at Dunkirk and evacuated thousands of troops from the beaches there*

The Last of the Paddlers

One of the most famous of Thames estuary paddle steamers of all times was the little 316 g.r.t. *Medway Queen* and during September she made her last farewell to London River. She was built in 1924. Once the Thames was the scene of a score or more paddle pleasure ships, even up to the 1939 war, which took thousands of "cockneys" from the historic Pool down for a day at the seaside coastal resorts. The *Medway Queen* was the last of this type of paddler to remain in service, crossing the estuary regularly during the summer months making her way to Southend-on-Sea.

Although operating from Rochester she was often on charter trips into the London River. Towards the end of her service she was looked upon as a real old Thames "lady" by passengers and waterside workers alike. The days of the score or more of pleasure steamers running trips to the coast have, alas, gone. In the 1965 season only one such vessel, a motor screw ship remained on the old established route. Paddler *Medway Queen* herself rang "finished with engines" some two seasons ago and then went into the East India Dock to await her fate. Apart from being the last steam paddle ship plying in estuary waters on passenger trade, the vessel is looked upon with further pride and affection for the part she played in the evacuation of Dunkirk in 1940. She brought back no fewer than 7,000 troops rescued from the beaches. Other war duties included service as a shallow draught mine-sweeper and later as a training vessel for this service within the Royal Navy.

The reasons for the efforts made to preserve her from the breakers are therefore obvious. After long negotiations and almost at the eleventh hour, she was saved. Instead of heading for Belgian scrappers the little *Medway Queen* was towed by Watkin's tug *Dhulia* to the Isle of Wight where she is to become a yacht club headquarters with a small Dunkirk Memorial Museum on board. With her going ends more than 140 years of the Thames steam paddle pleasure ships service, most of it based out from the Pool of London just below the famous Bridge.

P.L.A. Lecturers for University Course

The University of London has recently started an interesting study course entitled "Problem of Ports" which consists of eight lectures by experts in several fields in the ports industry, many of whom are P.L.A. Officers, and which will continue on Thursday evenings at intervals throughout the winter. The course is being co-ordinated by the well-

known geographer (and P.L.A. Monthly contributor) Dr. James Bird, who will act as Chairman for the series.

Among the lecturers will be Mr. E. P. J. Lunch, P.L.A. Director of Finance, whose subject will be "Port Finances and Long-term Investments", Mr. R. F. J. Smeardon, Divisional Engineer at Tilbury Docks, who will speak on "The Role of the Port Engineer", Col. R. B. Oram, who retired from the Authority's Service as Superintendent of the Surrey Commercial Docks, and whose lecture will be entitled "Cargo Handling Technique", and Mr. E. H. M. Price, the P.L.A. Economics Officer, who will talk on "Port Economics".

This promises to be a most valuable opportunity for all those engineers, mariners, railway operators, road hauliers, port administrators, economists and geographers who wish to improve their knowledge of modern major ports at work today. Further information can be obtained from Mr. E. Smith, Transport Studies Society, 166 Tubbenden Lane, Orpington, Kent.

New Rescue Cruiser for R.N.L.I.

Gone are the days when the word "life-boatman" conjured up a picture of an oilskin-clad figure, straining at an oar in a primitive battle against wind and waves. Weather conditions do not change but craft do and the men of the life-boat service are now able to conduct their life-saving activities with considerably less danger and discomfort. A new rescue cruiser for the R.N.L.I., recently on show at Tower Pier, is their first vessel to be built in steel (apart from some steam life-boats built around the turn of the century), and a feature of its design is the provision of facilities for the crew to sleep on board. This innovation in itself greatly increases the range of a rescue vessel and coupled with the fact that it is engined by twin 8L3B Gardner diesels, each developing 230 brake horse power at 1,150 revolutions per minute, this new-type vessel is a powerful addition indeed to the R.N.L.I. fleet. With a maximum speed of 11.14 knots, and a range of 650 nautical miles at this speed, the new vessel is faster and has a wider range than any of the standard life-boats. She was built in the Scotstoun, Glasgow, yard of Yarrow & Co.

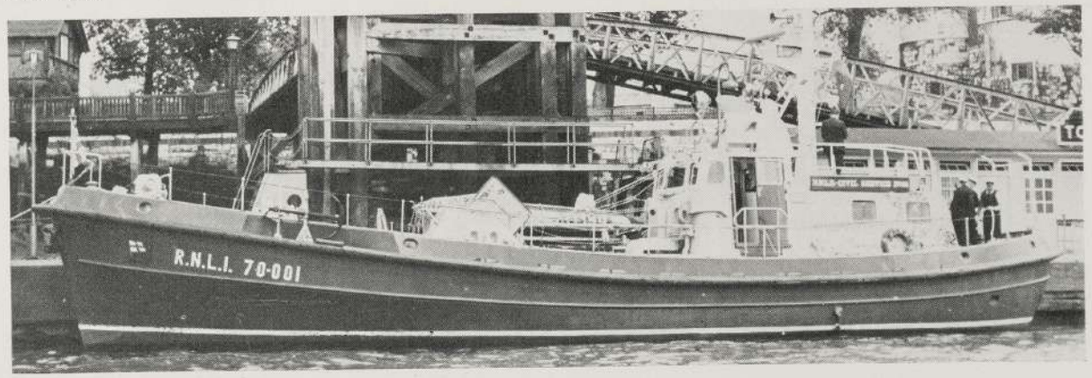
The cost of this 70ft., high speed rescue cruiser, which is approximately £57,000, is being met by voluntary gifts from Civil Servants, through the Civil Service Life-boat Fund.

The crew's quarters, with four berths, are aft, and at the after end of the wheel house a messing cabin and fully equipped galley are provided. In the forward cabin are stowage for six stretchers and seats which can be converted into berths.

The vessel is divided athwartships by six water-tight bulkheads and

A new style life saving cruiser for the R.N.L.I. lying on show to the public at Tower Pier recently. The cost, £57,000, is being met by voluntary gifts through the Civil Service Life-boat Fund

Photo P.L.A.



the engine rooms are separated by a longitudinal centre-line watertight bulkhead. Power assisted steering gear and modern electronic devices complete the equipment.

The rescue cruiser carries two additional rescue craft on board. One is an inflatable inshore rescue boat powered by a 33 h.p. outboard engine and stowed on the engine casing forward of the wheelhouse. Derricks are used for handling this craft. A smaller boat of similar design with an 18 h.p. engine is stowed in the forward cabin. Also carried are the standard items of equipment to be found in life-boats —a searchlight, deck floodlight, breeches buoys, parachute flares, hand flares, a wave-subduing oil tank with pump, line-throwing pistol, life-jackets, scrambling nets, hatchets, axes and knives.

After her visit to London, where visitors included the Lord Mayor, the new rescue cruiser left to carry out an extensive tour of the south-west of England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland, before taking up regular duties, probably in the Bristol Channel.

We hear that another vessel of this type is at present under construction and life-boatmen will appreciate having another of these high speed, long-range craft in their fleet, for it seems that each year is busier than the last for them. This summer has been the busiest the life-boat service has ever known, the 448 life-boat and 300 inshore rescue boat launchings exceeding even the peak summer of 1964. From May to August inclusive life-boats saved 294 people and inshore rescue boats 146.

Bisley Rifle Trophy for Lord Cottesloe

In September we reported the success at Bisley of the P.L.A. Vice-Chairman when he was second in both the Elcho and Albert Matches. Now we are able to record that Lord Cottesloe has carried off the Stamford Young match rifle trophy at the English VIII autumn meeting at Bisley. The event was shot at 1,000, 1,100 and 1,200 yards over two days, and two competitors, Lord Cottesloe and Mr. George Twine, made scores of 391. Lord Cottesloe won the tie shoot.

Russian Visitors

For the first time for many years a Russian Naval vessel was moored in the pool of London, when the oceanographic research ship *Nikolai Zubov*, 2,674 tons, with the Hydrographer of the Soviet Navy on board, returned the visit to Leningrad made last year by the Hydrographer of the Royal Navy in H.M.S. *Vidal*, 1,940 tons. The *Nikolai Zubov*, commanded by Capt. 3rd Rank Aleksandr Khake, was built in Poland and commissioned last year. She has a complement of 120, and is named after a famous Russian oceanographer. The ship is air conditioned throughout and is fully equipped for hydrographic, meteorological, chemical and photographic work with seven laboratories manned by 70 scientific workers.

During the Russian ship's four-day stay in the Pool, the Soviet Navy Hydrographer, Admiral Anatoliy Rosskho, with some of his officers and scientists, visited the Royal Navy Hydrographer, Rear Admiral E. G. Irving, at his headquarters at Cricklewood. The ship's company made many sightseeing tours and visits in London and the Port of London Authority were glad to be able to entertain some of the officers on board their s.y. *St. Katharine*, and show them something of the industrial reaches of the Thames before cruising in the Royal Docks.

Shortly before the arrival of the Russian survey ship, the Minister of the U.S.S.R. Merchant Marine, Mr. V. G. Bakaev, had been visiting the U.K. at the invitation of Her Majesty's Government. His visit was the first by a Soviet Minister responsible for shipping and his discussions

Photo: Cameron

The Russian hydrographic survey ship, Nicolai Zubov, *lying at Battlebridge Tier in the Upper Pool during her recent courtesy visit to London. The photograph is interesting in that it was taken from an unusual viewpoint—the top of the jib of the P.L.A.'s newest floating crane, the* London Leviathan

with the President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Douglas Jay, M.P., and the Minister of State (Shipping), Mr. Roy Mason, M.P., revealed a wide measure of agreement and understanding on problems of mutual interest. During his ten-day stay in this country, Mr. Bakaev visited a number of shipping and port organisations and his tours included a cruise through the Royal Docks as a guest of the P.L.A. on the *St. Katharine*.

"Victoria Embankment" a picture by the late Wm. A. Watkins, R.I. recently acquired for the P.L.A.'s collection. Four of this brilliant tideway artist's watercolours were secured. His recent death is a great loss to the London of the Thames and shipping for Mr. Watkins was a noted member of the Wapping Group who have done so much to portray the scenes and moods of Thames-side

Art in the City

The 19th Annual Exhibition by the Wapping Group of Artists, on the theme "The Spirit of London River", held at the Royal Exchange recently, fully maintained the reputation these talented artists have gained over the years, evidenced by the heavy scattering of red dots on the moderately priced exhibits.

Each year the pictures portray the ever-changing Thames. Vavasour Hammond, always a sympathetic as well as accurate painter, showed a most attractive "View from London Bridge". That ever-popular subject, the "Prospect of Whitby" was painted this year by Rowland Hilder. The freshness and brightness of colours of this scene as well as the same artist's "Greenwich Yacht Club" were most pleasing. Donald Blake's "In London Docks", Charles Argent's "Russian Timber—Surrey Docks", and Jas. Middleton's "Activity—Surrey Commercial Docks" most successfully represented dock scenes, but Donald Blake's "Big Crane" somehow failed to convey any feeling of power. Bernard Bowerman, who was responsible for the splendid etching advertising the Exhibition, showed an interesting view of St. Peter ad Vincula in the Tower of London.

Only one portrait was shown. "Rotherhithe Resident" by W. G. Morden, typifies the old-time docker—worn but still hopeful, of strong

convictions yet ruled by commonsense. The same artist's "Billingsgate", a lively representation of the busy market scene, was one of the best exhibits. On view also were the four pictures of the late William A. Watkins, loaned from the Authority's Collection. Of these, the Thames Embankment scene, showing Cleopatra's Needle at dusk, reproduced opposite, stood out for its nostalgic appeal.

In the centre of the hall ribs from the Roman ship discovered during the construction of the Blackfriars underpass were on view. Over 1500 years old, the timbers and stout iron nails were in a remarkable state of preservation.

New Waterways

To historians of the future, one of the most curious features of our times will surely be the self-mutilation currently being practised on our inland transport system. With inadequate roads becoming daily more and more clogged with traffic, one would think that every effort would be turned to getting the most out of alternative forms of transport—the railways and canals. But not a bit of it. The railway companies, which bought up the canals and allowed most of them to go derelict to reduce competition, are now nationalised and in the grip of doctrinaire theory which is by no means endorsed by all railwaymen. What the outcome will be remains to be seen but it seems to be on the cards that the day will come, possibly quite soon, when desperate consigners of goods will bless the dogged determination of the Inland Waterways Association to keep in being the network of Britain's canal and inland navigation system.

Water-borne transport is the cheapest of all in terms of power required per unit load. That it is slow compared with fast expresses or road transport is undeniable but for goods required in large quantities at regular intervals it is ideal. Once the pipe line is primed, the arrival of goods at the other end is continuous. The quantity in the pipe line is greater but reduced transport costs may well more than compensate.

Not until the Transport Act of 1962 were the nationalised waterways placed under a control—the British Waterways Board—independent of railway interest. Since its creation the Board has been carrying out an investigation into the present state of the inland waterways system. An interim report appeared in January 1964 but a more intense investigation, with a Development Committee investigating the relevant factors, set out to determine the kind of waterway system required in the second half of the 20th century and the first half of the 21st.

The first part of their findings has just been published in a booklet, *New Waterways* which merits the close attention of every person who has an interest in our inland transport system. Beginning with the postulate that particular kinds of goods are suited to particular kinds of transport, the report recommends certain comparatively minor work on the existing canal system. For the future, the Development Committee recommends the construction of new waterways on a scale which will allow them to relieve roads of bulk traffic and of a type commensurate with those in use and under construction in Europe. A Grand Contour Canal all on the 310ft. contour, which is found to run nearly continuously through the country, is urged. This waterway should be capable of taking craft of at least 1,350 tons capacity. From this contour canal there should be feeders to connect with sea-ports.

As well as its transport function, such a canal system would have great importance for the water supplies of the country and would also provide attractive and profitable pleasure uses.

This is no pie in the sky report. It is cool, realistic, documented and completely accurate. Detailed figures support all its arguments and

proposals and only narrow partisan minds will quibble at its findings. As a report it is refreshingly businesslike and simple in its production. For once we have a document free from the self-conscious gimmickry of self-styled designers, printed in a readable type face and organised in that unfashionable, but highly convenient form of numbered paragraphs. It probably cost less than one tenth of the figure for the glossy nonsense which so often slides across our desks into w.p.b.s. and does its job ten times better. If the plain common-sense approach it typifies is that of the British Waterways Board, we should end up with a good waterways system.

Detergents go "Down Under"

As technology progresses and new products come onto the market, so shipping companies and dock operators have to keep pace with the demands for specialised cargo-handling techniques. The bulk carriage of chemicals and plastics is a case in point and the New Zealand Shipping Company have been using special stainless steel tanks fitted on the main deck of some of their vessels for this purpose. These have proved so successful that similar tanks are to be built-in to their new ships. When the Federal m.v. *Huntingdon* was in Royal Albert Dock recently 60 tons of Dobane, a highly concentrated detergent, was pumped direct from six road tankers on the quay into one of these special tanks on her deck for carriage to Wellington, New Zealand. The Dobane, a detergent intermediate which is manufactured by the Shell Chemical Company, was consigned to their New Zealand company who will sell it to local manufacturers for use in the production of domestic and industrial detergents. Shell export large quantities of this product to the Continent, especially to Holland, usually shipping direct from Shellhaven.

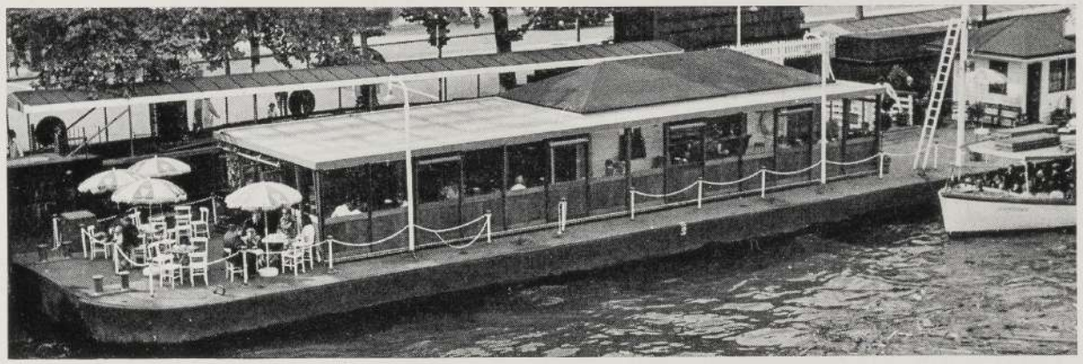


Photo: Thames Launches

Charing Cross Pier gets a restaurant. Thames Cruises, Ltd. have provided this attractive face-lift as part of their new services from the pier

Cruising Down the River . . .

In July we reported the introduction of a new two-hour cruise in the Tourist and Holiday Service operated by Thames Cruises, Ltd., from Charing Cross Pier. Now, with summer behind us, we can reflect upon the pleasure that these river trips brought to the thousands of holiday-makers, visitors and Londoners alike, who despite the wretched weather felt that no visit to the capital was complete without a cruise upon the river which is her life-blood.

Thames Launches tell us that some 30,000 adults and children used their tourist cruise and 28,300 the short tourist cruise; 17,300 were taken from Charing Cross to Tower Pier and over 1,000 paid to enter the pier for the sole purpose of using the restaurant.

Next year it is hoped that the pier will be used for the embarkation of special parties arranged by business houses and other organisations wishing to show the river to associates and guests from abroad.

. . . and Through the Docks

The splendid facilities for visitors to see the sights of London river offered by the many cruises operating from the city's piers are well known. Equally in demand are the river and dock cruises which the P.L.A. organise during the summer months and which are usually booked up well ahead. From Tower Pier visitors are taken downstream as far as Woolwich where they enter the Royal Docks and cruise through the Royal Albert Dock and King George V Dock— a fascinating experience at any time, but even better on a sunny summer day. This year 57 such trips were made, 30 for the general public and 27 for schools and altogether over 21,000 people were able to see something of the workings of one of the world's finest dock systems.

The clearing house of the world

The tide comes in on London River and carries with it on the flood the ships of every nation, come to trade. Cargoes in and cargoes out—a never ending stream passes through Britain's premier port, which is served by over 100 shipping lines. The Ships' Station List for a typical day in the Surrey Commercial Docks, centre of the softwood trade, illustrates this when it shows a total of 31 ships of 14 different flags: 4 British, 5 Finnish, 4 Dutch, 4 German, 3 Greek, 3 Russian, and one each from Italy, Iraq, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Lebanon, Bulgaria and France.

So while we cannot promise a Quinquereme of Nineveh, we can produce almost any other vessel from almost anywhere else in the world.

Photo: Port Line

The P L A. floating crane London Samson *lifting a yacht, the* Caprice of Huon, *on to the Port Line m.v.* Port Phillip, *9,947 g.r.t. in the King George V Dock recently. Also loaded was the yacht* Lorita Maria. *The yachts were being returned to Australia after taking part in the Fastnet Ocean Race.*

One of the P.L.A.'s new harbour service launches, the steel-hulled Benfleet *at speed in Northfleet Hope*

Photo: Cameron

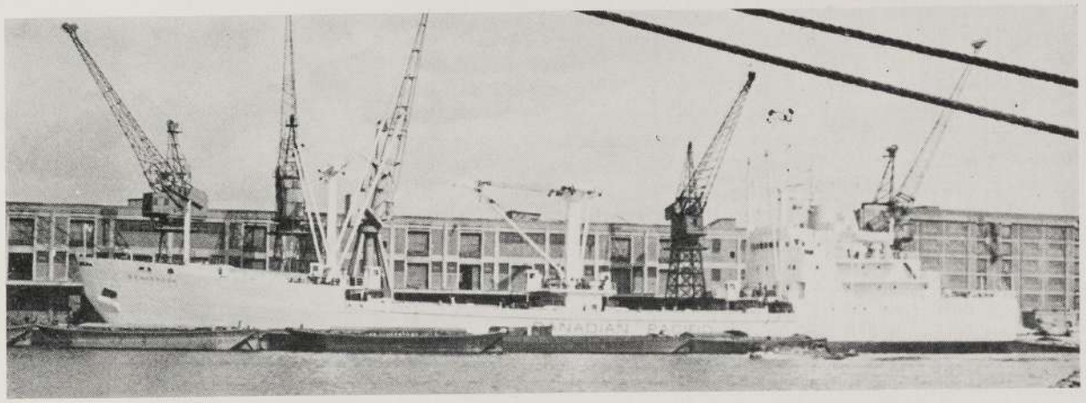


Photo: P.L.A.

Canadian Pacific's new Beaveroak, *7,000 tons d.w.t., loads at the Royal Victoria Dock before her maiden voyage. The new ship is specially ice-strengthened for winter voyages up the St. Lawrence*

A new "Beaver" for Canadian Pacific

The Port of London has been the starting point for many maiden voyages and it was from the Royal Victoria Dock that yet another vessel set out on her first voyage recently. She is the new cargo liner *Beaveroak*, 7,000 tons d.w.t., which joins Canadian Pacific's fleet of "Beavers" on the service between the United Kingdom, the Continent and Canada.

The new ship is ice-strengthened to enable her to navigate up the St. Lawrence to Montreal in ice conditions beyond Lloyds Class I Ice, and her raked stem with cut up has been designed for this purpose. The shell has been strengthened throughout the length of the ship and a further precaution is an ice horn over the top of the rudder.

Beaveroak has been designed basically for handling container traffic (including refrigerated containers), provision being made for the use of fork lift trucks on the second and upper decks. A high degree of automation has been incorporated, including an English Electric "watchkeeper" in the engine room which continuously scans 202 sensing points of the main engines, auxiliary equipment and cargo containers. By the use of this equipment a routine schedule which could take an engineer one hour to check manually is monitored and recorded on *Beaveroak* in less than two minutes. Another interesting point is that the main engine, of the "Clarke-Sulzer" 6RD68 type, can be operated from the bridge. The ship has a service speed of 16 knots.

As we go to press we learn that the ship has just completed her first transatlantic round voyage. She will be able to display her ice-strengthened qualities in the New Year when she is scheduled to make a voyage up the St. Lawrence to Quebec and Montreal in February. This will be a record winter penetration of the river by a Canadian Pacific vessel, Quebec having been the limit in the past.

The "Beaver" fleet will operate a regular service from London and other European ports to Saint John, New Brunswick.

Navigational Aids for Shipping

A recent publication issued by the G.P.O. entitled *Radio Services for Shipping* will, no doubt, be of interest to the many users of the Port of London. The booklet, which is available free of charge from Radio Services Department, G.P.O. Headquarters, Room 643, Union House, St. Martin's-le-Grand, London, E.C.1., is a mine of information on the services available through the G.P.O. It contains details of radio stations, examines present facilities in the light of estimated future demands and features information on radiotelegrams, radiotelephone calls and present charges and conditions.

The extent to which detailed navigational information can ease the work of pilots and masters, is, of course, nowhere better demonstrated than in the day to day operation of the P.L.A.'s Thames Navigation Service at Gravesend.

Pineapples by Express Delivery

When the *Benloyal* came into service in 1959 her owners, the Ben Line, were the first shipping company to use 20-knot ships in the trade between Europe and the Far East. Today the Ben Line operates three fast services each month to the East, average passage times being: Singapore —19 days; Bangkok—22 days; Hongkong—27 days; and Japan—33 days.

The newest ship in this service, *Benledi*, 13,000 tons d.w.t., has recently returned to London at the end of her 23,000 mile maiden voyage, carrying among her cargo canned Malayan pineapple which British housewives were able to buy only a few weeks after it was picked and processed. At a ceremony on board *Benledi* shortly after her arrival at the Royal Docks, her Master, Captain O. Tucker, presented a golden tin of pineapple to Miss Noorina Sopiee, daughter of a senior official from the office of the High Commissioner for Malaysia, to celebrate the occasion.

To celebrate the arrival in the Royal Docks of a large shipment of Malayan pineapple only four weeks after it was picked and canned in Johore, the Master of Benledi *presented a golden tin of the fruit to the daughter of a senior official of the office of the High Commissioner for Malaysia*

Photo: Ben Line

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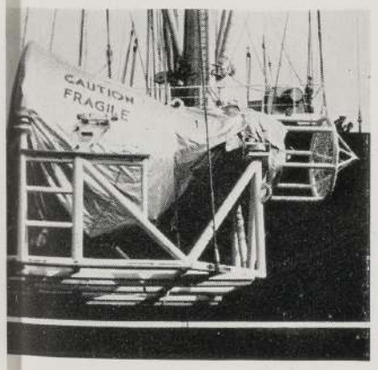

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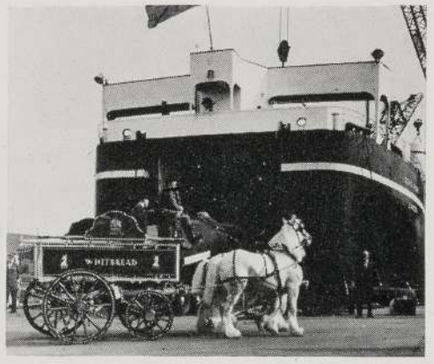


Left: *The Mercury capsule from Freedom 7 in which Commander Alan Shepard made the first American manned space flight in 1961 arriving at the Royal Docks en route to the Science Museum where it will be on display for six months. It has been loaned by the Smithsonian Institute*

Photo: P.L.A.

Right: *But beer prefers horses (or do horses prefer beer?) Both the beer (Whitbread's) and the horses (two of those which draw the Lord Mayor's coach) were en route to Belgium for the "October Feasts". The horses are Crown and Anchor from the Whitbread team. The ship into which the equipage is being driven with Mr. Jack Strickland at the reins, is the roll-on, roll-off* Doric Ferry *of the Transport Ferry Service who will roll out this particular bunch of barrels to Whitbread's continental customers at Antwerp*

Photo: Transport Ferry Service

Mermaid Theatre

The revival of plays by dramatists whose works outraged the conventions of our forebears can be nothing but a good thing, if only because they can be seen as a yardstick to measure the progress of human thought. But when such a play is spiced with Shavian wit and sparkle and contains much that is as applicable to modern days as to the time of its first production, then it is worth doing for the entertainment value alone. Such is the case with "Fanny's First Play", whose production in 1911 was Shaw's first commercial success and which the Mermaid Theatre have revived with notable success.

Shaw himself described the play as a "pot-boiler", though later admitting that it had more meat in it than his first description implied. After half a century, and although the "angry young people" in Fanny's play seem to us to be insufferably self-righteous, and the lampoons of Shaw's critics are largely lost upon us, the meat is still there all right. The youngsters' rebellion against the conventions of the middle-class morality of their time has its parallel in much that we see today though the conclusion can also be drawn that the only constant in a world of fast-changing moral attitudes is the cry of parents of every generation, "What is the world coming to?".

The Mermaid production has some clever characterisations, notably Barbara Mitchell's Mrs. Gilbey and Timothy Bateson's Mr. Knox, whose bewilderment at the escapades of their offspring in their separate drunken assaults upon the police is manifest in every word and action. Gwendolyn Watts, as the "daughter of joy" with a heart of gold, gives a splendidly uninhibited performance and the rest of the cast do well in Don Taylor's production of a play whose theme can be summed up in Shaw's own words ". . . the young had better have their souls awakened by disgrace, capture by the police, and a month's hard labour, than drift along from their cradles to their graves doing what other people do for no reason other than that other people do it. . . ."

From the beautiful Loire Valley Chateau of Villandry (left) the ship below takes her name. She is the car-ferry Villandry, *jointly owned by the British and French railways, launched in November, 1964 by Chantiers Dubigeon-Normandie at Nantes. She is in service on the Newhaven-Dieppe route and was recently brought to the Port of London, that perfect nautical shop window. The* Villandry *is 344ft. long and carries vehicles on two decks. Loading is through stern doors. Beautifully appointed and equipped, the vessel brings new standards of cross-channel travel.*

Opposite : *This picture, taken from the top of the jib of the P.L.A.'s new floating crane* London Leviathan, *seems to express the spirit of London River—ships arriving and leaving on the tide, as they have done for two thousand years. Nowadays Tower Bridge, gateway to the world and symbol of London River throughout the seven seas, stands astride the birthplace of the port. The Port of London provides liner services, of a range and frequency which no port in the country can match, to all parts of the globe. Richest in experience and newest in equipment and facilities, it is not just a commercial enterprise—it is the heart of the commercial life of the nation.*

Photo: Cameron

Ocean Travel out of London

by E. B. Preston

Photo: Cameron

The *Monte Ulia*, 10,123 g.r.t., of the Spanish Aznar Line leaving The Pool of London

THE formidable total of 59,298,000 tons of cargo passed through the Port of London in the year ending 31st March, 1965, giving irrefutable statistical proof of its supremacy as the leading cargo-port in the United Kingdom.

This pre-eminence in one sphere, however, tends to obscure the fact that London also handles a considerable traffic in passengers, 70,943 and 124,789 of them having embarked or disembarked in the Docks and at Tilbury Landing Stage respectively during the same period; and this aspect of the Port's activities demonstrates very fully the diversity of ocean travel. Sailing out of London are ships of every size and type, offering the prospective passenger voyages of varying length to most parts of the globe, in accommodation ranging from the sumptuous suites of a luxury liner to the minimum requirements for a reasonably comfortable journey in a small cargo-ship: something in fact, to suit all pockets and every kind of taste.

Not unnaturally, Tilbury Dock, with the P.L.A. Landing Stage conveniently close to railhead, road and ferry, is regarded as the most usual point of arrival and departure for passengers on the London River, with the Royal Group in second place; but a few examples chosen at random will serve to show that the intending ocean traveller can sail from practically every dock in the Authority's system.

But beginning as far upstream as possible, he can embark in the Pool of London in a ship of the Spanish Aznar Line, bound for Spain and Madeira, or he can set out on his sea adventures from the London Dock for a voyage to the Western Mediterranean in a ship of the MacAndrews fleet, ranging in size from 1,200—2,600 g.r.t., most of which have cabins for as few as four or as many as 12 passengers.

From the South-West India Dock he can embark on a more extensive tour of the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa by Prince Line, the largest and latest of whose 12-passenger motor-ships is the 4,800-ton *Lancastrian Prince;* and from the same dock or the Millwall Dock nearby on a roughly similar itinerary by Ellerman's Wilson Line, which usually employs on this run vessels of about 2,300—3,000 g.r.t. Also from Millwall Dock sail Strick & Ellerman ships of between 8,000—9,500 g.r.t., most of which carry 12 passengers on a much longer voyage to Red Sea Ports and the Persian Gulf.

Across the River in the Surrey Commercial Dock he can take passage for Gdynia, Leningrad, or South and West Finnish ports in a ship belonging to the United Baltic Corporation, which may be as small as 1,600 tons or as large as 3,500, and in which he will find himself one of 2 or 3 passengers. The average tourist will prefer to visit the Baltic during the sunny months of the short northern summer; but U.B.C. ships, which are strengthened for ice, make the round voyage with unfailing regularity in severe winter conditions, when the accommodation is often used as an economical form of travel by businessmen or *au pair* girls.

Moving downstream and back to the north shore, the Royal Docks offer a rich selection of ocean travel opportunities, for here are berthed many of the larger passenger-vessels based on London: the New Zealand Shipping Company's *Rangitane* and *Rangitoto*, 21,865 g.r.t., employed on the long voyage to New Zealand—an excellent way of escape from the English winter; Royal Mail Lines' *Aragon*, *Amazon* and *Arlanza*, 20,000-ton mailships on a regular fast schedule to East Coast ports of South America; the Union Castle Line's *Kenya Castle*, *Rhodesia Castle* and *Braemar Castle*, all of 17,000 g.r.t., engaged on the East Africa service and periodically on the Round Africa voyage—another popular winter escape route—although the *Braemar Castle*'s future is at present undecided after her return to London in November of this year; and the *Kenya* and *Uganda*, British India's 14,000-ton sister-ships taking passengers down the East Coast of Africa as far as Durban with many interesting ports of call *en route*.

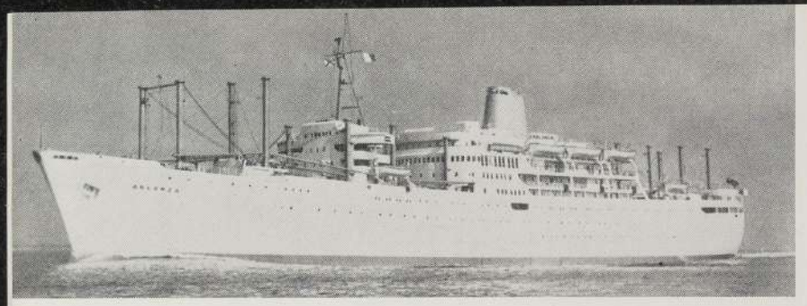
For those who find the allure of the Orient perennially irresistible, the P & O mailships *Chitral* and *Cathay* provide an agreeable glimpse of Ceylon, Malaya, Hong Kong and Japan on their scheduled round voyages from King George V Dock. Each of 13,000 g.r.t., they carry what is for their size a small number of first-class passengers only—about 220—surrounded by the luxury of a much larger ship but in a more relaxed atmosphere.

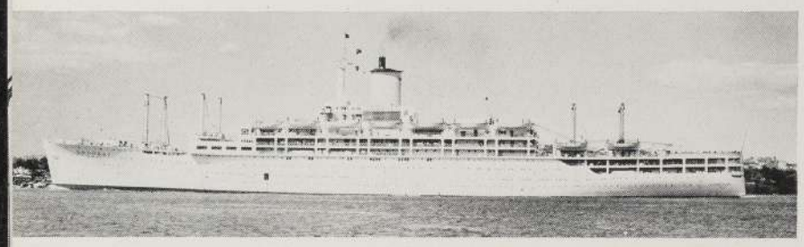
Also berthing regularly in the Royal Docks—although usually discharging in the South-West India—are the Ellerman & Bucknall quartet, *City of Durban*, *City of Exeter*, *City of Port Elizabeth* and *City of York*, each of 13,345 g.r.t., and each with accommodation for about 100 passengers to South and East African ports; the 10,700-ton *Argentina Star* and her sisters of the Blue Star Line, carrying a smaller complement to the East Coast of South America; and Shaw Savill's *Ceramic*, 15,896 g.r.t. and *Gothic*, of the same size, which are still taking passengers to the Antipodes, although two similar vessels, *Athenic* and *Corinthic* have recently had this accommodation removed and are now cargo-carriers only, following the management's decision to concentrate passenger-traffic in the *Southern Cross* and the *Northern Star*, which cater solely for this trade and have no cargo-space.

This current trend among shipping companies, related to rising costs and changing patterns of travel, is particularly unfortunate for those whose passion for ocean voyaging outstrips the depth of their pockets, for it has also affected the type of cargo-

Today, the luxury of a swimming pool is found in the "Twelvers" as well as the biggest passenger liners—the screened swimming pool on the Ben Line's *Benledi*, and *below*, the same ship's passengers' beautiful lounge. The *Benledi*, providing a fast service to the Far East, carries passengers in three double berth and six single berth cabins of outstanding taste and comfort

Photo: Ben Line





Above: The Royal Mail Line's *Arlanza*, one of the company's 20,000 ton mailships on a fast schedule to East Coast ports of South America.

Photo: Royal Mail Line

Below: The distinctive P & O liner *Oronsay*, 27,632 g.r.t., with her "welsh hat" funnel is a regular visitor to the Tilbury Docks

Photo: P & O

ship carrying 12 passengers at modest fares. The British & Commonwealth Shipping Company has eliminated passenger cabins in the "twelves" of both the Union-Castle and Clan Lines, the *Argyllshire* of the Scottish Shire Line remaining at present the only cargo-vessel belonging to the Group that still takes passengers. The Blue Funnel Line has followed suit with the removal by the end of 1964 of all passenger accommodation from the *Anchises* and "H" class ships, a process which will probably be extended to the "P" class, leaving unaltered only the "M" class "twelves" in the United Kingdom—Far East trade.

Nevertheless quite a few companies are maintaining untouched—at any rate for the present—the passenger cabins in their cargo-ships, and several of these begin their long voyages from the Royal Docks. The P. & O. Company's "S" class, of about 9,000 in gross tonnage, and the slightly smaller "C" class, sail regularly to the Far East on itineraries that may include India, Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Formosa and Japan. The Ben Line—also berthing in the South-West India—on a similar run, offer unusually luxurious accommodation for a cargo-vessel, especially in their new *Benloyal* class of over 11,000 g.r.t. For those wishing to visit Australia and New Zealand, the 13,000-ton ships of the Port Line, such as the *Port New Plymouth* and her sister the *Port Nicholson*, provide ample space for 12 passengers. Running to the Pacific coast of North America are the "Loch" class ships of Royal Mail Lines in the 10,000—11,000-ton range; and the same Company's "E" class of about 7,500 g.r.t. make regular voyages to the West Indies, the Spanish Main, or the West Coast of South America, the latter being also served by the 8,600-ton air-conditioned *Pizarro*, *Potosi* and *Coto Paxi* of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, while the East Coast ports of the South American continent are on the itinerary of the Houlder Line's 10,700-ton passenger-carrying cargo-ships, with calls at the Canary and Cape Verde Islands on the way.

Finally, at Tilbury Dock and Tilbury Landing Stage, an immense amount of passenger activity takes place. From the Landing Stage, used by the largest liners entering the Thames, there are regular sailings by Swedish Lloyd's graceful passenger vessels to Gothenborg, as well as by ships of the Baltic State Steamship Line bound for Russia, and British India's "floating classrooms", the schoolships *Dunera* and *Devonia*.

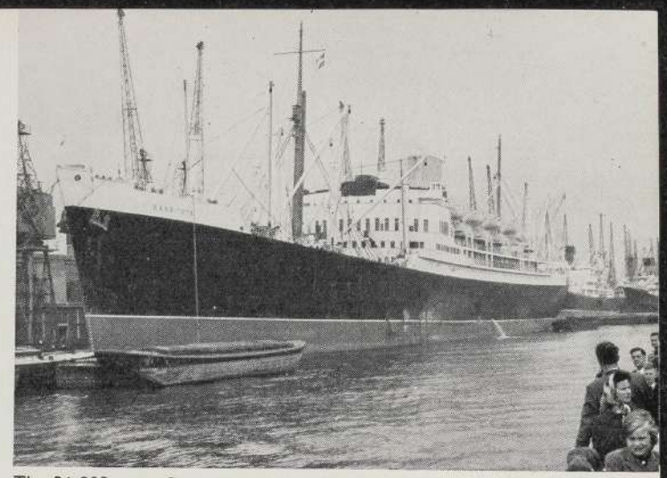
Inside the dock itself function the roll-on, roll-off services of the Atlantic Steam Navigation Company, which ferry all forms of road transport, with their drivers, across to Antwerp and Rotterdam. Here, too, operates the group of shipping companies which have combined to serve West African ports: Elder Dempster, Black Star, Guinea Gulf, Nigerian National, and Palm Lines. In many of their ships, which are usually between 5,000 and 7,000 g.r.t., an Owner's Suite for two passengers is provided, which can consist of dayroom, sleeping-cabin and bathroom.

Across the dock lie the great white ships of P & O—Orient Lines, whose passenger complements number between 1,400 and 1,600, their gross tonnage varying slightly from the 28,000-ton *Himalaya*, *Oronsay* and *Orcades* to the *Orsova*, 28,800 tons, and the *Arcadia* and *Iberia*, each of 29,600 tons. An exception is the *Chusan*, 24,261 g.r.t., which normally berths in the King George V Dock, although often

embarking her passengers at the Landing Stage. Except during their busy cruising season, all these ships sail from Tilbury to India, Malaysia, the Far East, Australia, and across the Pacific—or alternatively via the Atlantic and the Panama Canal—to the West Coast of the United States and Canada: the sort of itinerary that constitutes the ocean traveller's dream of a long sea voyage.

From this brief and far from comprehensive survey, it will be concluded that passenger-carrying vessels can be divided into four main categories: the large and luxurious, in size—so far as London is concerned—of not less than 15,000 and not more than 30,000 g.r.t., accommodating a large number of passengers but also taking considerable quantities of cargo; a smaller class of between 10,000 and 14,000 tons, with a passenger-list of anything from 85 to 250, in which passengers and cargo are roughly of equal importance; a third category designed primarily to carry cargo which augments its earnings by taking a few passengers as well, 12 being such a usual number that a whole class of these vessels has emerged as a post-war development; and lastly, cargo-ships pure and simple, in which room has been found to accommodate two extra persons over and above the normal ship's complement.

For those with a genuine love of the sea such voyages provide an excellent return for a very reasonable outlay. The quarters vary from the adequate to the comfortable; they will almost certainly include a private bathroom for the very good reason that such an arrangement is the most convenient for

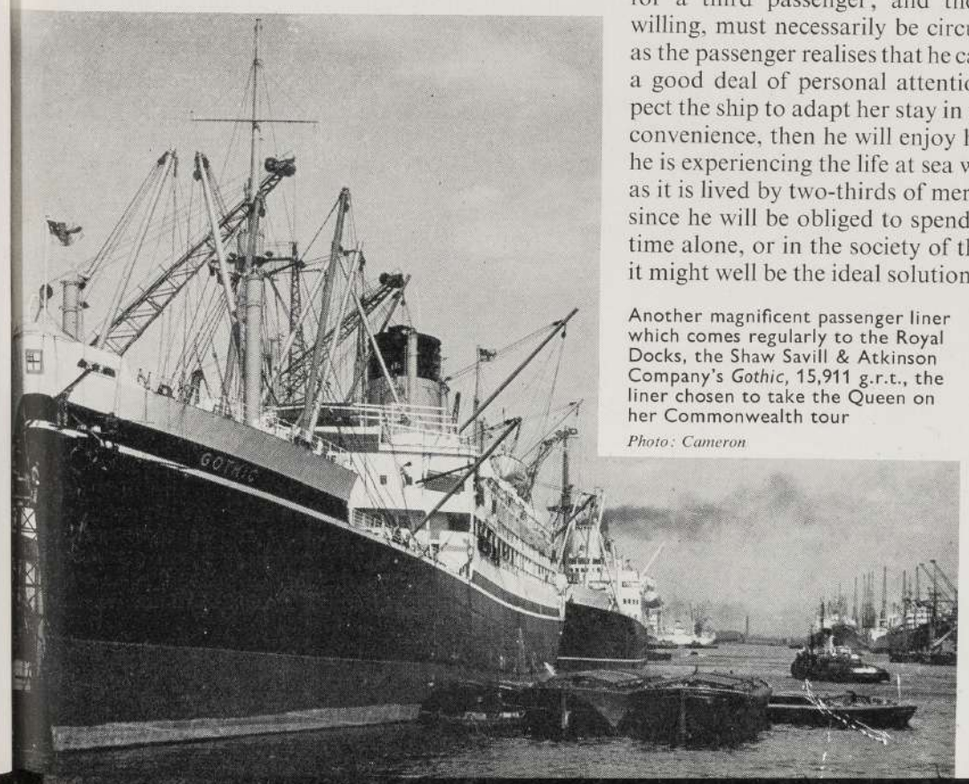


The 21,809 g.r.t. *Rangitoto*, of the New Zealand Shipping Company, in the Royal Docks. In the summer months regular P.L.A. River and Dock Cruises afford the public the opportunity of seeing the wonderful sight of lines of big ships such as this, in the Docks. No other port offers such a range of passenger services as London

Photo: Cameron

all concerned. The deck space in the smaller ships will be limited and the lounge equally so, but meals, taken in the saloon either with the ship's officers or after they have finished, will be generous in quantity and often unexpectedly good in quality, even if sometimes lacking in what restaurateurs call the "art of presentation".

No extra hands will have been signed on to look after so few additional persons, even when a spare cabin or even the hospital has been made available for a third passenger; and the service, however willing, must necessarily be circumscribed. So long as the passenger realises that he can no more demand a good deal of personal attention than he can expect the ship to adapt her stay in port to suit his own convenience, then he will enjoy his voyage. At least he is experiencing the life at sea without adornment, as it is lived by two-thirds of merchant seamen; and since he will be obliged to spend a large part of his time alone, or in the society of the other passenger, it might well be the ideal solution for a honeymoon!



Another magnificent passenger liner which comes regularly to the Royal Docks, the Shaw Savill & Atkinson Company's *Gothic*, 15,911 g.r.t., the liner chosen to take the Queen on her Commonwealth tour

Photo: Cameron

Aboard a "twelve" he will find that considerably more attention has been given to his welfare. His cabin—with private bath or shower—is probably larger and better furnished than any equivalent in a passenger-ship below the level of a *de luxe* suite. In the saloon he and his fellows will be allocated to the senior officers' tables; the lounge will most likely be equipped with a small bar—in some cargo-vessels there is a separate cocktail bar—and there is room on the boatdeck, despite the cargo-gear, for various games to be played, such as deck quoits, deck tennis and shuffleboard. The illusion of a passenger-liner in miniature may well be enhanced by the officers themselves participating in the passengers' amusements to the extent of organising an evening's "horse-racing", "housey-housey", and almost certainly a captain's cocktail-party.

In spite of all this, however, it is the cargo that matters. The cargo controls the ship's movements, regulates the duration of her stay in port. It may be infuriating for the passenger to be obliged to leave Hong Kong before he has explored its many possibilities; but if Hong Kong has no cargo to offer at the moment and a lucrative "parcel" of timber is waiting to be loaded in Otaru before a certain date, then the ship will sail. The passenger voyaging to Jamaica may feel frustrated because the ship does not lie in Kingston; but if "no inducement" presents itself in Kingston and a cargo of bulk sugar can be picked up in the outports, then to the outports she will go.

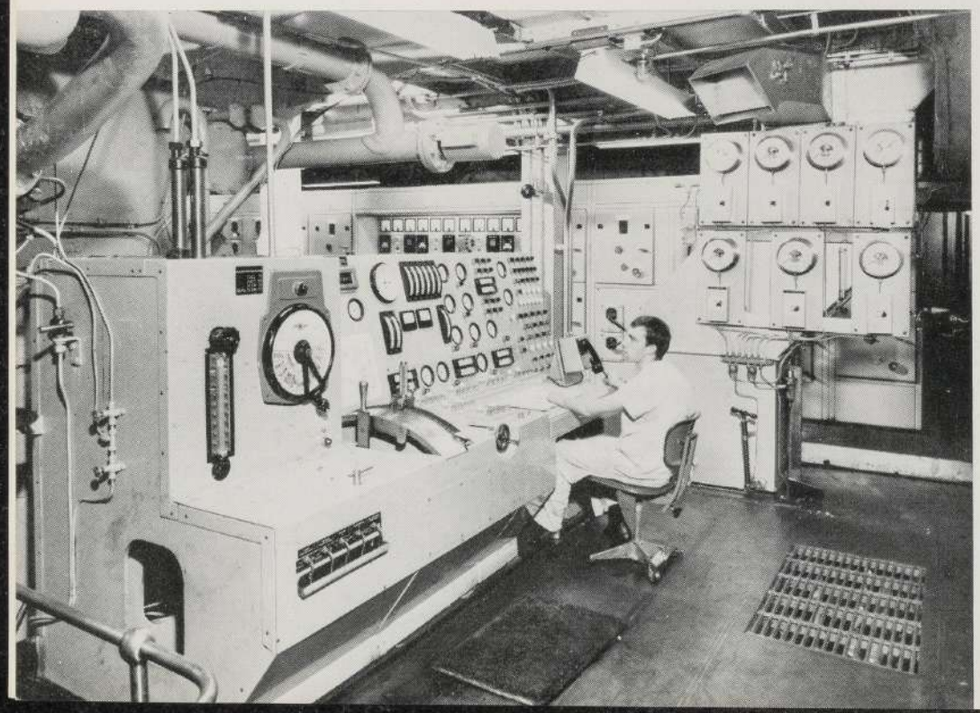
To counterbalance this sort of disadvantage, the cargo-ship should normally spend days in port where her larger, passenger-carrying sister, working to a tight schedule, can afford to spend no more than hours; and she will visit many places off the main sea-routes that the mail-ship never enters.

Yet there is nothing quite to equal the experience of travelling in luxury, in the sort of ship in which passengers have top priority, over which a great deal of care, consideration and money has been expended to ensure that they are fed, housed, transported, and suitably entertained in conditions that a confirmed sybarite would not despise.

The list of facilities provided for the passengers' convenience is formidable. Air-conditioning, stabilisers, swimming-pools, dance-floors, superb and over-abundant food, magnificent public rooms, cabins as large and luxurious as many a modern flat: there is nothing, it seems, that the shipowner has not thought of for their comfort, safety and enjoyment.

Yet to the seasoned traveller, in the final analysis the most valuable asset of any ship is the human element. It is people who are the ship's best advocates: the hospitable and friendly officers; the head waiter, smiling and attentive, who murmurs: "The Staff-Captain would like you at his table, sir"; the bedroom steward who says he is "glad to be looking after you again, sir"; the smokeroom steward who remembers that the pre-lunch gin should be iced, and the after-dinner coffee black, with sugar.

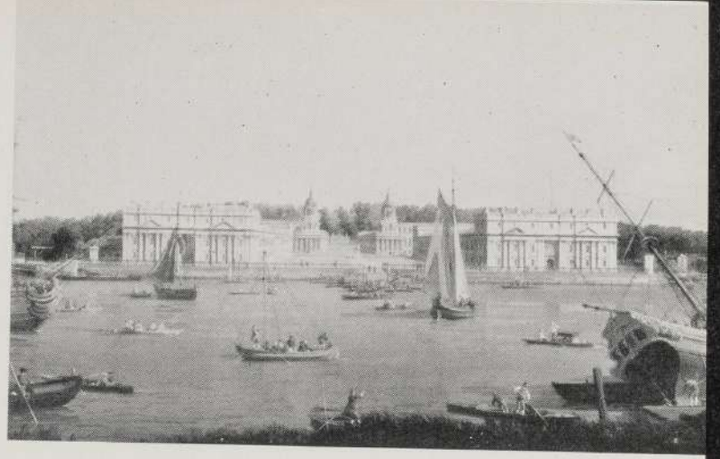
But whatever the kind of ship, length of voyage or oceans crossed, when he steps ashore again in London, he will have benefited by that unique, always unforgettable, and sometimes wonder-working experience known as ocean travel.



Don't forget the driver! Whose accommodation nowadays is almost as good as that for the passengers. This engineer is seated at the control station of the main engine of the *Bendearg*, 16,000-ton cargo liner of the Ben Line. She achieved 20 knots on trials and is the largest liner built so far for the company

Photo: Ben Line

New Books



The least altered view in London. The old Royal Hospital, Greenwich, about 1755 as painted by Canaletto

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Trustees, National Maritime Museum

MARITIME GREENWICH *by Frank G. G. Carr* (*Pitkin*, 2*s.* 6*d.*).

The most unaltered view in London, the riverside scene which includes the old Royal Hospital at Greenwich, is also one of the most beautiful. Here too is the National Maritime Museum, the charge of the author of this booklet, who is its Director. On the hill in Greenwich Park is the old Royal Observatory. On the foreshore, the famous old clipper *Cutty Sark* is preserved in her permanent dry dock. The Royal Naval College has its home here, its most famous feature being perhaps the lovely Painted Hall, ranking after the Sistine Chapel. "Some hold, however, that Thornhill's composition is more masterly than that of Michaelangelo. Sir James Thornhill worked on the hall for 20 years from 1707 to 1727 with his assistants. In the parish church of St. Alfege, Wolfe lies buried. In the Queen's House, is hung the famous Sir Godfrey Kneller portrait of Samuel Pepys, the "saviour of the navy". The chronometer which Captain Bligh used during the ill-fated *Bounty* voyage can be seen ticking away merrily in the Navigation Room of the National Maritime Museum where, if you are very unlucky, you will not find the nautical picture you want among a collection of 200,000 photographs.

If there is a more lovely and fascinating place on London River than Greenwich it remains undiscovered. Frank Carr's account of all the wonders of Greenwich, brief though it is, conveys the special charm of this part of Thames-side and some of his own enthusiasm comes over too. The photographs are felicitously chosen and in the booklet's 25 pages there is compressed a wealth of factual information presented in a readable style. The National Maritime Museum's Director has shown that that normally highly suspect *genre*—the tourist booklet—can be a valuable and attractive work.

A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MARINER *by A. G. Course* (*Muller*, 30*s.*).

In 1659, apprenticed to the chief master's mate, a young man of 17 years, Edward Barlow, joined his first ship. This was the *Nazeby*, afterwards the *Royal Charles*. Nothing unusual in that. But Barlow has given the world one of the best contemporary day-to-day accounts of life at sea at the time. His journal records the whole of his nautical life and, like Pepys' famous diary, is a major source book. The last entry occurs when he was 61 and immediately after his survival of the great storm of 1703 which caused terrible losses at The Nore and in the Downs.

His journal has been published before in a two-volume work edited by Basil Lubbock but this is now out of print and Captain Course's simple and straightforward account is timely. It soon becomes apparent why Barlow has such an appeal for Captain Course. The 20th-century master mariner appreciates the superb seamanship and skill of Barlow who, nevertheless, did not rise to more than temporary command. For the rest of us, there is pleasure in the development of a noble and attractive personality.

As an accurate source on maritime life at the time, in naval and merchant ships and particularly in the early East Indiamen, Barlow's journal is, of course, invaluable and Captain Course brings out this aspect with understanding and clarity.

Like many more outstanding men with high personal standards, Barlow was his own worst enemy for he could not suffer fools gladly, even when they were in a position to help or hinder his career. For this reason, he failed to get commands, often when he seemed the obvious choice. If only he could have curbed his tongue until *after* he had obtained the patronage he sought!

Since the navy, the East India Company and indeed, most of British maritime commerce was based on the Thames, Captain Course's book is full of the detail which appeals to Thamesmen. The author has an attractive habit of following byways of nautical history. Dealing with piracy for instance, the author tells us that even as late as 1817 a Moorish piratical raid in search of slaves took place *in the Thames*! Anxious navigators may be relieved to learn that the navigator of one of Barlow's ships was so far out in his reckoning that he sailed the ship into the Bristol Channel in the belief that he was entering the English Channel.

The book is full of this kind of anecdote and comment and, being equipped with an index, is a useful reference book in addition to being a highly readable presentation of one of the best journals of its type ever written.

A.L.

SMALL BOAT IN SOUTHERN FRANCE *by Roger Pilkington* (*Macmillan*, 30*s.*).

Enthusiasts of the "Small Boat" series will welcome this ninth meeting with an old friend to share the tranquil joys of this final voyage of the ageing *Commodore* from Trévaux on the Saône to Bordeaux via Rhône, the Camargue, the Canal du Midi and the Garonne. The voyage begins where the last book *Small Boat through France*, (reviewed August 1964) ended.

In his usual charming vein of good humoured leisureliness sharpened with flashes of gentle irony, Pilkington describes French life and landscape as seen from the comparatively unusual angle of canal and river. Here there is ample time to "stand and stare" at cypress and praying mantis, to taste the local wine, for Muscat de Frontignan found favour with Louis XIV, Voltaire, Hercules and Zeus; and to explore churches and castles steeped in the grim history of the Albigensian heresy.

This is no "seven countries in seven days" type of tour burning up the miles on the highways of Europe and gulping down its history in indigestible chunks. True, the bloody story of Languedoc equals any of history's many horrors but in the example of the Cathars so mercilessly slaughtered by fire and sword 700 years ago, Pilkington obviously found further strengthening of his own faith in spiritual freedom which neither Innocent III nor his successors of the Inquisition could forever suppress. But the dark deeds of the past are not allowed to disturb too harshly the sunny present-day quiet of tree lined banks and pretty canal towns like St. Gilles, where excitement stems from the "course"—a more humane form of bull entertainment than the Spanish variety. Later, near Bordeaux an amusing variation on the theme was found in "le Tauroball"—soccer with a loose bull on the field!

Difficulties of language, of ladderless locks, weed fouled propeller, or obstructionist fishermen are recalled with amusement rather than exasperation. One wonders if they seemed that way at the time! Perhaps small boat owners are more patient by nature than car owners.

Among the figures of history and legend who people the book from Simon de Montfort to Aucassin and Nicolette, none is more truly the hero of the occasion than Pierre-Paul Piquet whose brilliant engineering combined with Colbert's drive and Louis XIV's patronage to create the Canal du Midi linking Mediterranean and Atlantic. As a very knowledgeable and experienced canal user, Pilkington describes with appreciative enthusiasm the difficulties and achievements of the man whose work has endured, with little modification for 300 years. He only regrets that Frenchmen as a whole make little use of their canals for pleasure, so that many have decayed beyond use.

Sadness at the final parting with the *Commodore* is mitigated by the promise of *Commodore II* now taking shape in a Greenwich shipyard and future voyages on the Thames and to the Black Sea. A.L.

TANKER DIRECTORY OF THE WORLD 1965 *edited by John Fordree (Terminus Publications, Ltd., 80s.).*

Oil tankers, despite their unromantic cargoes and somewhat monotonous service schedules, have a fascination all their own. Partly this arises from the immense size of many modern tankers—they have an air of titanic power enhanced by the vast energy potential of their huge cargoes. Last year's *Tanker Directory* listed, in the "league tables" of tankers, four of over 100,000 d.w.t. and nine between 90,000 and 100,000 d.w.t. The 1965 edition shows that there are now six tankers of over 100,000 d.w.t. in service and 22 in the 90,000 to 100,000 d.w.t. group.

The directory section itself contains 30 more pages than the previous edition and provides an alphabetical list of tankers of over 400 d.w.t. giving flag, owner, tonnage, propulsion, builders and year of build. There are 4,768 entries in this section, an indication of the immensity of the world's demands for energy sources. Tanker owners and managers and their fleets are listed and owners and managers are cross-indexed.

There is the usual wide range of interesting articles headed by *Research into Tanker Problems* by Dr. R. Hurst, Director of Research at the British Ship Research Association. A sign of the times is provided by the article by H. Stanbrough on *Cleaning For Grain at Sea*; increasing competition demands that unproductive time in port be cut to a minimum.

A completely new section deals with *Propulsion Diesel Engine Types* in 15 pages covering a selection of the world's foremost marine diesel engine ranges. The *Tanker Terminals* section, introduced last year, has been revised and extended, whilst the *Statistics* pages have been entirely re-designed.

THE FURY OF THE SEAS *by Edward Rowe Snow (Alvin Redman, 21s.).*

The power of the storm-whipped ocean is immense. Rachel Carson in her authoritative work *The Sea Around Us*, refers to a well-authenticated observation of a wave 100ft. high. At Wick in northern Scotland in 1877 the sea tore loose a single mass of stone and concrete forming the pier and weighing 2,600 tons.

That men can survive the fury of the seas seems scarce believable yet Edward Rowe Snow's tales show that people did weather the disasters he describes. The present volume, as he states in his introduction, deals with maritime catastrophe for which the raging of the ocean was responsible and opens with accounts of four hurricanes along the New England seaboard, the first in 1635 and the last in 1938. The *Flying Dutchman* legend is covered, but perhaps a more disturbing mystery is provided by the utter disappearance, in January, 1918, of the U.S.S. *Cyclops*, a ship in the transportation service. Unusual circumstances surrounded the disappearance of this ship. The captain had spent some of his early life in Berlin and just before the ship sailed on her last voyage he disposed of much personal property of the kind one would sell if leaving a country for the last time.

"No survivors" was also the requiem for all on board the British naval frigate *Saldanha* wrecked on the east coast of Ireland in 1811. Actually one survivor did turn up—the captain's parrot, only to be shot as a hawk some months later. Round the neck of the supposed hawk was a gold ring inscribed "Capt. Pakenham, H.M.S. *Saldanha*".

Snow's tales, then, are more than descriptions of storms at sea—there is even a hidden treasure legend among the stories—and the collection makes good reading. An index of names of people, places and ships makes it easy to look up details of particular shipwrecks.

A.L.

BEST SEA STORIES *edited by Oliver Warner (Faber, 21s.).*

Where Edward Snow's collection of nautical yarns is a selection from history, Oliver Warner's is a selection from literature, beginning with Defoe's famous Captain Singleton and Smollett's even better known Roderick Random and fetching up with Monsarrat's *The Cruel Sea* and Golding's *Pincher Martin*. Between, Marryat, Hardy, Conrad, Kipling, Masefield, "Bartimeus", Leo Walmsley, C. S. Forester and Richard Hughes are all represented by first class pieces of maritime fiction.

There should be a "rightness" about an anthology; it should be more than a mere collection and one should feel of each item that it was the obvious and inevitable choice. Oliver Warner's anthology comes near to this ideal and the chronological arrangement, though claimed to be no more than a convenient one, seems in fact to give form and purpose to the collection. At any rate, it is an arrangement which gives a very convenient survey of the development of sea-faring as a literary subject. It also provides a compelling artistic unity which puts the book very nearly in the cannot-be-put-down class. A.L.

THE PORTSMOUTH BLOCK-MAKING MACHINERY *by K. R. Gilbert; a Science Museum Monograph (H.M.S.O., 5s.).*

"Machinery so perfect appears to act with the happy certainty of instinct and the foresight of reason combined." So wrote the novelist Maria Edgeworth amazed by the world's first mass production plant which, with six men in charge, could produce as many blocks in a day as had formerly required the work of 60 men.

It is appropriate that the first substantial application of machine tools to mass production should have been for the manufacture of ships' blocks—equipment used in vast quantities by a maritime nation in the days of sail. By 1808 the Portsmouth plant had an annual output of 130,000 blocks; the estimated annual consumption by the Royal Navy at the beginning of the 19th Century was 100,000.

The credit for the design of a systematic plant for mass production belongs to Marc Isambard Brunel, father of Isambard Kingdom Brunel of Thames Tunnel, *Great Eastern* and other engineering fame. Others, however, such as Henry Maudslay who built the machinery and Brigadier General Sir Samuel Bentham who suggested that the Government should undertake the work with powered machinery, made no small contribution.

There were some 45 machines, designed and made so well that they remained in service into the mid 20th Century. As a result the Science Museum were able to acquire from the Admiralty a representative group of eight machines for their Machine Tool Collection.

Mr. Gilbert's pamphlet, superbly produced and illustrated sets the historical background, describes the machines and their uses and, using hitherto unpublished material settles the controversy over who should be credited with the invention of the machinery.

THE ELIZABETH *by Neil Potter and Jack Frost (Harrap, 25s.).*

The *Queen Elizabeth*, flag-ship of the Cunard fleet and the world's biggest passenger liner, is a vessel of 83,673 g.r.t. Launched in September, 1938 by Queen Elizabeth, she was overtaken by world war before she could go into service. In March, 1940 she sailed from the Clyde, ostensibly to go to Southampton. In fact, she made her famous secret dash across the Atlantic to New York. So well had the secret of her real destination been kept that enemy bombers had concentrated on Southampton ready to try to destroy her.

During the war, whole divisions were transported in the *Queen Elizabeth*. Altogether 811,324 passengers were carried during her troop-ship service and she steamed 492,635 miles. Many tall tales have been told about the war service of the two *Queen* ships and the present volume is likely to have secondary value, apart from its inherent interest, as a kind of official biography. One apocryphal story, however, is irresistible. It claims that when the *Queen Elizabeth* passed the battleship H.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth* in the Red Sea, only one signal passed between them—the word "Snap!"

She made her first commercial voyage in October, 1946, some of the passengers being people who had booked before the ship had been launched. The ship has carried famous cargoes too, notably the Lincoln copy of *Magna Carta*, Lewis Carroll's first draft of *Alice in Wonderland* and the largest collection of British and foreign postage stamps ever to leave this country.

There must be few people who can resist the romance and appeal of a giant liner and Neil Potter and Jack Frost show a brilliant journalistic skill in their telling of the story of a vessel which may well become the world's most famous ship. A.L.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Wellington Chamber of Commerce, New Zealand, Business Directory and Register of Members, 1965.
An issue published to celebrate the centenary of Wellington as the capital city of New Zealand.

What's Where in London with B.P. *by Denys Parsons (Kenneth Mason, 5s.).*
Fifth edition of the well-known "offbeat London shopping guide". No matter what you want, its source is likely to be listed here. From genuine Australian boomerangs to zebra skins, it is all presented in an entertaining fashion. Write to the author if you have anything new (and recommended) to offer in the way of off-beat shops and services.

The London and Blackwall Railway *by Geoffrey Body and Robert L. Eastleigh (Trans-rail Publications, 288 Carterhatch Lane, Enfield, 6s.).*

The Annual Dog Watch *(Shiplovers' Society of Victoria: Seafarers' Education Service, 5s. 6d.).*
This year's *Dog Watch* contains two items of special interest to Thamesmen, the most startling being an article *Ships as Museums* by Lars Grondstrand who asserts roundly that "In many ways they have made a real mess of her", referring to the *Cutty Sark*. Apart from alleged errors in her rerigging, Lars Grondstrand takes exception to the housing of a collection of figure-heads in the lower hold and especially to the visitors' entrance which has been cut in the ship's port side. Grondstrand's argument is that if a ship is laid up as a museum she should look exactly as she looked when on service. Perhaps the next issue of *Dog Watch* will contain a statement by the defence.

The other article of Thames-side interest describes the PLUTO project which supplied one million gallons of fuel a day to the Allied forces in Europe during the second world war.

These and other articles maintain *Dog Watch* at its usual high standard.

The Port of Kobe, Japan

TRADE WINDS — The Far Eastern Trades: Part I

By E. C. Osborn

THAMES-SIDERS of an older generation will recall that one of the more conspicuous features of the London river and the London Docks would be the exceptionally large, unraked, blue funnel of an Alfred Holt ship, either as she passed up- or down-stream, when it would be visible for miles across the Essex marshes, or towering above the single-storey transit sheds as she lay at the berth, usually in the Royal Docks.

These tremendous funnels belonged to such well-known ships as the *Teucer*, 9,100 g.r.t., a stalwart veteran built in 1906, which not only survived the First World War but took part in the Sicilian landings during the Second; the *Nestor*, 14,600 g.r.t., built in 1913 and carrying first-class passengers; the *Achilles*, 11,400 g.r.t., one of the distinctive "goal-posters"; and the *Autolycus*, 7,800 g.r.t., both typical of the fleet's steam-driven cargo-vessels in the early '20's, with a good sheer fore-and-aft, slightly raked bow, counter-stern, and, of course, the great funnel, set dead upright amidships and painted the famous blue with a black top.

The first ship actually to wear this celebrated colour was the *Dumbarton Youth*, a three-masted sailing-vessel with direct action engines, which Alfred Holt bought in 1852. An agreeable story relates how, on taking over his new acquisition, Holt discovered that he had also become the possessor of a large number of bibles and some blue paint. Over the disposal of the first item history is reticent, but with admirable frugality the paint was effectively applied to the *Dumbarton Youth*'s tall, thin funnel, thus settling almost by chance a choice of colour that was to become a familiar name and a common sight throughout the Eastern hemisphere.

Alfred Holt and his brother Philip were born into the age of steam, although they followed the custom of their period by crossing yards on their steamers' masts; for 1965 is the Centenary Year of the Blue Funnel Line, this comprehensive title being

normally used to embrace the group of companies comprising Alfred Holt & Co., the Ocean Steam Ship Co., Ltd., the China Mutual Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., and the Nederlandsche Stoomvaart Maatschappij "Oceaan" N.V.—the N.S.M.O. for short.

The Ocean S.S. Co., began operations with the *Agamemnon*, 2,280 g.r.t., a single-screw vessel capable of 10 knots, barque-rigged with a single funnel. Built in 1865 by Scott's of Greenock—a firm that was to record many contracts for the Blue Funnel Line in its order-book—she sailed on her maiden voyage in 1866 from Liverpool *via* the Cape, Mauritius, Penang and Singapore to Hong Kong and Shanghai; loaded tea at Foochow and completed the homeward run of 12,252 miles from China in less than 58 days—a danger-signal to the tea-clippers, then at the height of their powers.

In the same year and from the same yard came in quick succession the *Ajax* and *Achilles*, completing the trio of sisters that were to found the Line still called on Merseyside "the China Company", although to-day its trade routes run to many other regions.

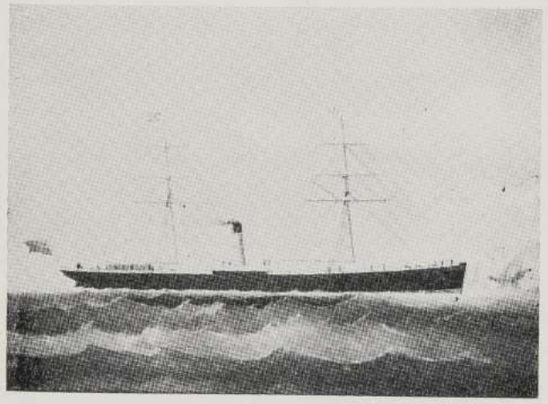
They established, too, the immutable system of naming Blue Funnel ships after mortals in Homer's Iliad or the Odyssey. This has been ascribed to the Holts' admiration for the heroes of Greek mythology, but an official definition states that the brothers regarded the creation of their steamship company as the supreme adventure of their lives, comparable to the experiences of Ulysses in the Odyssey, and named their fleet accordingly. The Homeric analogy has been extended to the Company's Birkenhead shore establishments, Odyssey Works, which houses all technical services, and Aulis, the recently-opened training-school; Aulis being the port from which the Greek warriors set sail for the Trojan Wars, and therefore "a place of preparation and a point of departure" for the young seafarer.

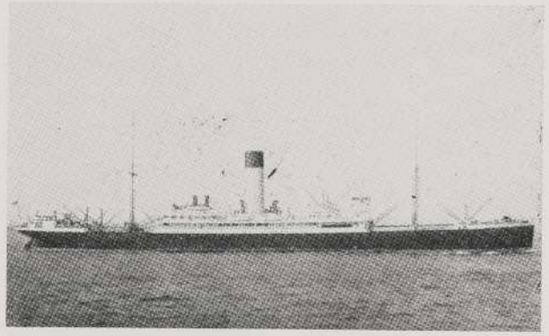
As with all steamship companies on eastbound runs, the impact of the new Suez route in 1869 gave the Line a tremendous fillip, with a corresponding expansion of the Blue Funnel fleet and the services it provided.

These had begun with a weekly sailing from Merseyside to the Straits Settlements, China, and ultimately Japan; and in 1880 the connection with London was initiated, to remain unbroken with the exception of the war periods. Regular departures from London were first scheduled in that year, but eventually they were discontinued, and London became—as it is to-day—one of the principal discharging ports on the Far Eastern run.

In the same decade the rapid development of rubber-planting in Malaya helped to fill the holds of Blue Funnel ships and augment their sailings, while coastal steamers owned by subsidiary companies acted as feeder-vessels, bringing to the great *entrepôt* of Singapore such commodities as tobacco from Sumatra and rice from Siam.

In 1902 Alfred Holt acquired 13 steamers formerly owned by the China Mutual Steam Navigation Company, a rival firm founded by British merchants with interests in the China trade; it exists to-day as a separate shipowning company but totally integrated with the Ocean S.S. Co., and the N.S.M.O. The last-named component of the group is the result of Alfred Holt's intervention in the Java trade when, in 1891, he formed a Dutch





Photos: Courtesy of Alfred Holt & Co.

Two famous early ships of the Blue Funnel Line, the old *Agamemnon*, 1865–66 (left), and the *Nestor*, 1913. The *Agamemnon*, bringing tea to England in 62 days, was one of the ships which spelled the doom of the tea clipper. The *Nestor* began with 275 passenger berths, soon raised to 338. She effected a sea rescue of another ship, the *Mungana*, which she towed 170 miles, in 1936

subsidiary to maintain a direct service between Javanese ports and Amsterdam. Wholly belonging to Holt's, its ships under the Dutch flag ran in conjunction with their British counterparts flying the Red Ensign; and since the late war they continue to serve, as N.S.M.O. units, on regular schedules between the Republic of Indonesia and European ports.

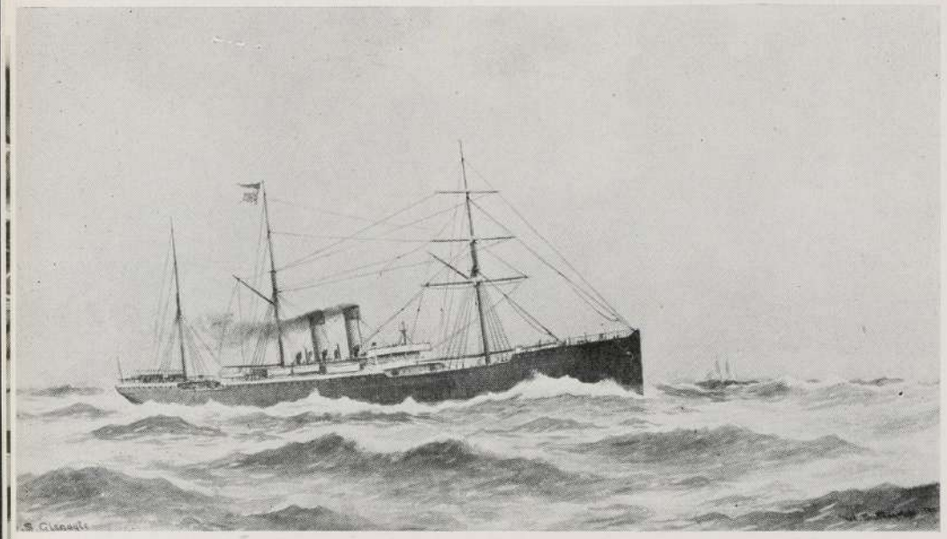
Earlier still, Alfred Holt's active mind had explored the possibilities of a Blue Funnel link between Singapore and the West Coast of Australia, which became an accomplished fact in 1890, when a fortnightly sailing on this route was inaugurated in conjunction with the Western Australian Steam Ship Company Ltd. Although the Australian line has long ago withdrawn, the service has been continued by Blue Funnel ships specially designed for the unusual conditions of the trade. The latest of these is the remarkable *Centaur*, 8,000 g.r.t., which contrives to combine successfully the apparently irreconcilable demands of carrying 200 passengers and 4,500 sheep, or 700 dairy cattle, together with refrigerated, liquid and general cargo.

A mainline schedule to Melbourne and Sydney began to function in 1901, but not until 1910 were Blue Funnel passenger services introduced to the Antipodes by three ships of the *Aeneas* class, 10,000 g.r.t. Similar accommodation was tried out to the Far East after the First World War and proved so popular that four 15-knot passenger-ships of 11,300 g.r.t.—*Sarpedon*, *Patroclus*, *Hector* and *Antenor*—were ordered to replace older vessels in the early '20's.

In 1915 Holt's bought the Indra Line, thus acquiring trading connections between New York and the Far East. Blue Funnel American interests are now secured by co-operating with the Swedish East Asia Company of Gothenburg to maintain the Malaysia Indonesia Line from Gulf and Atlantic ports, including New York, *via* Suez to Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. The service has been extended eastward to the Philippines, Hong Kong and Japan, where ships then load for Kingston and New York *via* Panama; the combined runs, under the title of the Blue Sea Service, complete a circumnavigation of the world.

The present Blue Funnel fleet is grouped in classes. Those ships arriving in London, usually at monthly intervals, from the Philippines, Malaysian and Indonesian ports, belong either to the "A" class, 8,000-ton vessels with a speed of 16 knots, or to the more recent "M" class, 17-knot ships built since 1957, while the larger "P" and "H" classes, operating on the Far East and Australian schedules respectively, are capable of 18½ knots. The funnels are still there, of course, still blue and still unraked, but neither so tall nor so proportionately large as they used to be, nor even amidships in the *Centaur*, where they are placed well aft, as they will be in the new *Priam* class of 8 ships of 13,000 g.r.t., for which an order has been placed this year.

Reluctantly, the Company is falling into line with present-day demands by cutting down on some passenger services and utilising the released space for cargo needs. As further proof of this modernity in outlook it has joined with three other leading shipping groups, the P & O, British & Common-



The old *Glenogle*, 3,749 g.r.t., built in 1882 with a designed speed of 15 knots, was the only two-funnelled ship in the Glen Line. In 1885 she was chartered by the British Government as an armed merchant cruiser. In 1904 she was sold to Burmese buyers and registered in Rangoon

Photo: Courtesy of Glen Line Ltd.

Photo: Glen Line

Above: Today's *Glenogle*, 11,918 g.r.t., a cargo liner with a service speed of 20 knots
Right: Wharf porters in Hong Kong

wealth, and Furness Withy to form the consortium known as Ocean Containers Limited which, as its name implies, is to promote improvements in the field of containerised cargo; and the pending amalgamation between the Ocean Steam Ship Company and Liner Holdings, which includes the Elder Dempster Line and the Henderson Line, will constitute one of the largest dry cargo-ship combinations in existence.

An important associate of the Holt Group is the Glen Line, acquired in 1935. This London-based concern, originally known as McGregor Gow & Co., has always been a prominent participant in the Far Eastern trade. At one period a component of the Royal Mail Group, it is composed of the Glen and Shire Lines, and to-day retains its independent management, its own individuality, house-flag and funnel. The latter, of a strong, deep red, is as impressive in its way as the blue funnel of a Holt ship. The Glen post-war fleet consists of 14 fine cargo-vessels, most of them with refrigerated space, of a gross registered tonnage between 8,000 and 12,000. They are exceptionally fast for cargo-ships; the *Glenfalloch*, 11,900 g.r.t., and her sisters, *Glenlyon*, *Glenogle* and *Flintshire*, all built in 1962 and 1963, were given a speed of 20 knots. Named after Scottish Glens or Welsh "shires", they maintain a fortnightly service from London to Japan, Hong Kong and Manila, with occasional sailings to ports in the People's Republic of China. Since they both load and discharge in London, there are usually two "Glens" in dock together, and it is not uncommon to see a third berthed with her sisters in the Royal Group.

One of many foreign lines trading between the Far East and London is Det Ostasiatiske Kompagni of Copenhagen—more conveniently known to us as the East Asiatic Company—which was founded in 1897 with support from the Danish Royal Family, and rapidly became one of Denmark's greatest shipping enterprises. Its business interests extend to many parts of the world, such as North America, South Africa, the West Indies and Australasia, although the scope of the present article is confined

to its Far Eastern connection, which embraces valuable teak concessions, rubber estates and forests in Malaysia and Siam.

The Company is notable for its early championship of Rudolf Diesel's marine oil-engine, and in 1910 Burmeister and Wain received an order to build the celebrated *Selandia*, 4,964 g.r.t., the world's first ocean-going motor-ship. Before her maiden voyage in 1912 she visited London, lying in the West India Dock, where she was inspected by many important people, among them Mr Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty. Her appearance attracted much attention owing to the entire absence of any vestige of a funnel, although she had three tall masts. So successful was her first voyage to Singapore and Bangkok that two sister-ships followed as fast as they could be built, the *Jutlandia* and *Fiona*, and these, with later units, began to make regular London calls on the homeward voyage from Siam. Subsequent motor-vessels on the run from Copenhagen to China and Japan were larger, with four masts; inevitably they were known locally on the China Coast as "four piecee bamboo—no smoke". The last of these distinctive funnelless ships to be built for the East Asiatic was the *Falstria*, 6,998 g.r.t., laid down in 1940 but not completed until 1945.

From Far Eastern forest to London—the biggest teak log ever brought out of Burma being unloaded in London. Besides providing by far the most frequent cargo liner services in the country, London is, of course, the nation's leading timber port

Photo: P L.A.

These ships had accommodation for 50 or 60 passengers, but here again the post-war trend has been to reduce this figure. The "M" class, built in the late '40's and early '50's, carry 12 passengers in air-conditioned comfort, but in the latest construction only two double cabins have been provided. The newest and largest additions to the fleet are modern cargo-liners such as the *Ayuthia* and *Asmara*, each of 10,800 g.r.t. with engines and living quarters aft, and the 12,500 g.r.t. motor-tankers *Asia*, *Java* and *Nakskov*, all built in the years 1960-61. Hulls are usually black with a white band, or very pale grey, with white upperworks and buff funnel. The house-flag shows a blue foul anchor which is to be seen in red on the funnels and house-flag of one of its many associated companies, the United Baltic Corporation. East Asiatic ships calling at London usually berth in Tilbury Dock.

Other foreign companies engaged in this trade include the Dutch Nederland Line and the Royal Rotterdam Lloyd; the French Cie. des Messageries Maritimes; the Mitsui Line, Nippon Yusen Kaisha and Osaka Shosen Kaisha of Japan; and the West German Rickmers Line; all of which being of too great a prominence to be dismissed in a sentence, will be considered more fully as "Trade Winds" progresses eastwards.

Of British companies, the P & O berths its passenger-ships *Cathay* and *Chitral*, 13,800 g.r.t., in the King George V Dock to discharge and load cargo, although passengers embark at Southampton for Malaysia, Hong Kong and Japan. Their cargo-vessels, usually the 9,000-ton, 17-knot "S" class and the smaller "C" class, also discharge in this dock, and after visiting continental ports, load there on a monthly schedule for Malaysia, Hong Kong, Thailand, the Philippines and Japan.

Ellerman & Bucknall maintain monthly sailings, principally to Malaysian ports; and the Ben Line—whose history will also be related in a future article—conducts a fast and frequent service to the Far East. This loosely defined region covers a huge and varied loading area that ranges from the manufacturing centres of industrialised Japan and, on a smaller scale, Hong Kong, to the hardwood forests of Sarawak and Borneo, and the rubber estates and tin mines of the Malay peninsula.

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