

# Wavelength

Lord Inchcape confident about £20m. profit forecast:

Stake planned in  
US oil and gas  
exploration

We're no  
lame

duck - says chairman



Lord Inchcape addressing stockholders. Others in the picture are (from left) Mr D D Brown, Mr Trevor Spittle (Deloitte & Co, Auditors), Mr A B Marshall, Mr D L Stebbings (Freshfields, Solicitors) and Mr L J A Collins. In the background is Mr H T Beazley.

In a speech delivered at P & O's annual general meeting to up-date information already given to stockholders in P & O's annual report and accounts, the chairman, Lord Inchcape, has revealed plans to acquire a stake in US oil and gas production.

The meeting, held on the 10th floor of the P & O Building on 14 March, also heard from Lord Inchcape of his confidence in the Group's £20 million profit forecast; of ideas for the future management of P & O properties and of the decision to dispose of the Ranger Fishing Company.

Of P & O's US oil and gas venture, Lord Inchcape said, "We have initiated a programme for acquiring interests in oil and gas producing fields in the United States which will provide immediate income to the group. The interests will be purchased and held through a controlling interest in Devon International, a company set up for this purpose. Properties to a value of some \$12 million are to be purchased by the Devon group in various states of the USA. A substantial part of the purchase price is being financed through production loans secured by the properties themselves.

"These investments fall into a low risk category compared with high risk exploration. In addition, the almost certain increase in the prices of oil and gas in the States is expected to make these purchases increasingly profitable. It is hoped to complete a number of similar purchases during the coming year."

## Forecast

Commenting on P & O's forecast and future prospects the Chairman said, "We have for the first time forecast, in

February, results for the year ending September. The recent currency fluctuations emphasise how difficult it is in any business - and particularly an international one - to be certain. But I am confident that given freedom from undue adversities we shall achieve our forecast profit of £20 million, which is much better than we have ever done before.

"But none of your Board believes that this is good enough, and we have some way to go before the return on capital employed reaches a level appropriate to a major business such as P & O. Nevertheless, I am sure you will agree that this represents a significant step forward.

"I do not promise that we shall forecast results at this stage every year, but I believe it is right to do so on this occasion because of the uncertainties generated by the extensive comment in the

second half of last year and on account of the changes in P & O. I do not wish to dwell unduly on the past, but it is worth emphasising for your comfort and encouragement that P & O is no lame duck. The turnaround in our results provides good evidence of this already."

## Properties

The situation regarding Group properties - the subject of considerable recent speculation following their revaluation - was also reviewed by the Chairman.

"The major part, in value, of our property portfolio is in London; much of it, like this building, already developed," he said.

"We own the Three Quays Building near the Tower and will be completing full development of that site in the course of the next few months, and that building,

which is a very suitable investment property, will then be fully let at a good return.

"The property at Cockspur Street, which is freehold and for many years accommodated the West End Passenger Office, has in large measure been refurbished and is now fully let.

"In the interests of efficiency and economy we are continuing to concentrate our City activities in Navigation House and in the Beaufort House complex. You may have seen some activity here in this building today - we shall shortly be occupying only the top two floors and the basement, while the other 11 floors are let.

"Apart from London, our properties abroad and throughout the UK amount to some 250 holdings; some offer development opportunities which we shall undertake, as appropriate, in con-

junction with local interests; we are selling some properties at the moment as they have no long-term investment or operational potential. A great part of our effort will go to good estate management, tidying up the portfolio and making it more manageable. We shall be selective in our choice of partners, retaining for each project the best possible professional advice."

## Ranger

Announcing the disposal of Ranger Fishing, Lord Inchcape said that he had always maintained that P & O's policy must be to concentrate on its strengths and to cut out loss making activities which show little prospect of recovery.

"The deep sea trawlers operated by Ranger Fishing are a valuable asset, but Ranger Fishing has

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## Share scheme

Lord Inchcape welcomed the Budget announcement of a share saving scheme for employees.

"I welcome the encouragement given by the Budget to a new share saving scheme which is intended to enable companies to offer employees the opportunity to buy shares on specially favourable terms by means of a save-as-you-earn contract," he said.

Full details of the government's scheme will not be known until the publication of the 1973 Finance Bill. But in broad outline, the intention is that staff should be able to subscribe for shares of their employing company at a price which, depending on the terms of the individual scheme could be up to 30% below the market price on the day of purchase and to pay for them with the proceeds of a personal save-as-you-earn programme. Such savings and the interest on them are free of Income Tax.

The shares would be held by trustees until the S.A.Y.E. savings were available to pay for them. At that date, the saver could either take the shares (and no doubt he would be glad to, if the price had risen meanwhile) or the cash.

Lord Inchcape said that staff would be consulted about the scheme, and that, if the staff wished, the Board would be ready to ask the stockholder's approval to go ahead.

## Special tribute to staff

A vote of thanks to the chairman, board of directors and staff was proposed by Mr P E Murray-Willis of Grenfell and company, Mr Murray-Willis said: "I consider it a great honour to have been invited to propose on behalf of the stockholders a vote of thanks to the chairman and board of directors.

This year we have a new chairman in Lord Inchcape and a new managing director, Mr. A.B. Marshall and a reconstructed board. I am sure that all of you would agree with me that this is no occasion on which to dwell on the past year's unhappy vicissitudes. Now we must look to the future under the company's new leadership

and take heart from Lord Inchcape's concluding sentence in his chairman's statement accompanying the annual report and accounts when he said that "there can be no doubt that the future of your company is now brighter than ever before".

P & O is a household word, not only in Great Britain but throughout the world. Any investor in international shipping must face the fact that his investments will be subject to a number of unpredictable hazards, such as the cyclical trends of world trade, the altering pattern of global transport and a host of other "uncomputerable" factors.

The fact that after 133

years P & O is now geared to face the future with every degree of confidence is, I think, a tremendous tribute to its management and staff, both past and present.

From your chairman's speech today you will, I know, share my satisfaction over the news that 1973 will see brought into service sixteen new ships, wholly owned, and three others partly owned and that quite recently orders have been placed for further deliveries in 1975, including two gas carriers and two product carriers. I feel sure that stockholders will approve the wide spread of the company's present interests and will also endorse your board's policy

that loss-makers must be deleted, without panic but without delay.

It would be invaluable, particularly to me as a stockbroker, to have the gift of prophecy, but I do feel that your company, in its 133rd year far from reaching the age of advanced senility, has now found new strength and purpose and in this regard I know you will like me on your behalf to pay a special tribute to the staff ashore and afloat who have shown such loyalty and steadfastness of purpose during these recent difficult days which I feel sure presage a new and exciting chapter in your company's long and distinguished history."



**Poems win £5 book token**

Poems written by Engineer cadet John J Finlayson have won him a prize of a £5 book token at Glasgow College of Nautical Studies. Here are two of them:

So we walked along the banks of this lake  
Stunned by its pure clear magnificence  
And dreamed of a swim at midnight  
The fire burning, crackling in the dark,  
Called us back  
That water was bloody cold  
Sat listening to the radio and silence  
Smelling of quiet and peace  
Feeling,  
Those hills high around us,  
Even rain and condensation in that plastic tent  
Could not spoil

I cannot see that it is wrong for me to want that complete happiness  
And hold it for my own  
Yet I see it passing from me with every passing day  
Soon though I hope not  
Will I see it gone?  
Please leave me this.

And in our wanderings we find that truth only lies in hollows on the way and walking we find that legs grow tired and meaningless foot follows foot  
as on we tread  
Mind is lifted into the setting searing sun  
and we mourn its passing from the sky  
as cold now bites  
and no headlights swoop from the road behind  
and on and on and on  
on on on  
till even pockets are cold  
and yet on the hitch-hiker.

Mr Dennis Barber, 2nd Officer, Jedforest and Miss Gillian Streeter cutting their wedding cake after their marriage at Castlehold Baptist Church, Newport, Isle of Wight. Before her wedding the bride was staff midwife at St Mary's Hospital, Newport where she had been since her return from two years' service with UNHCR in a mobile dispensary in Senegal, West Africa.

**Sarath qualifies**

Our congratulations to Sarath Sellaheva on qualifying as a cost and management accountant. Sarath, who is 25, joined the company a year ago and works in Bulk Shipping Division's management accounts department.

**Lifeboat drifted over 7,000 miles in 15 months**

A lifeboat lost by Heythrop 15 months ago off the coast of South Africa has been washed ashore in Albany, Australia.

The 24ft long lifeboat disappeared following an explosion on board Heythrop in November 1971. But just how it was lost is still a mystery. Some people think it was blown from its cradle, others believe it was jettisoned during the fire which followed the explosion.

Whatever the case, the boat travelled at least 7,000 miles between the African coast and Albany with a damaged propeller blade the only casualty.

Albany professional fishermen Les and Red Mouchemore sighted the boat drifting upside down towards the western end of Princess Royal harbour during the afternoon of 11 February.

They inspected it several hundred yards from shore and found it heavily encrusted in barnacles, some up to 12 inches long. Their attempts to right the boat failed and they were unable to identify the boat because the brass nameplate on the side of the boat was too far underwater.

Albany Customs were called in and under section 66 of the Customs Act the boat came under their charge and was held by them while the official receiver of wrecks was notified.

Customs officials then inspected the boat and opened the compartments, two of which were still



Heythrop at full speed.

perfectly sealed. More than 30 jars of barley sugar and nearly 30 tins of lifeboat biscuit rations were removed - and the water supply was found to be still reasonably fresh.

The lifeboat is designed to seat 30 people and is propelled by a hand rotated mechanism which is geared to drive the propeller.

How the boat found its way through the harbour's

170 yard wide entrance after drifting thousands of miles across oceans and not ending up smashed on some isolated coastline is something that probably will never be explained.



**Lauderdale in service**

Mrs A B Marshall, wife of our Managing Director, naming P & O's biggest ever ship, the 258,000 dwt oil-ore carrier Lauderdale at the Nagasaki yard of Mitsubishi. The 1,100 feet long vessel has a beam of 176 feet, a draft of 67 feet and her 32,000 shaft horse-power steam turbine engines give her a service speed of 15 knots.

**Jim Bayley to take over as Fleet Manager**

Jim Bayley is to take over as Fleet Manager when Patrick Stuart Williams retires on 1 May.

Mr Bayley's present responsibilities as Trade Manager, Oil and Bulk are to be separated and S M Carter will become Trade Manager, Bulk, and P J Wallis, Trade Manager, Oil.

Meanwhile, the Hon E M R Geddes, Development Manager, has transferred to a similar appointment in General Holdings Division. Responsibility for two of Bulk Shipping Division's major development projects have been transferred with him and all the present Bulk Shipping Development staff will also move to General Holdings Division.

For the time being A M Robb has taken over Mr Geddes' responsibilities as Development Manager, Bulk Shipping Division, in addition to his present job as Financial Controller.



Jim Bayley

## My father's many happy years with the old BI

Dear Sir,

In the last *Wavelength* I saw mention of two grand old gentlemen, one a namesake of mine, Garnet Scott, and the other, James Duncan, whom I met many years ago when I was just a young boy. Both had recently become nonagenarians.

My own father Martin Henry Embleton was 89 in November last and died on 21 December.

He joined the British India Company in 1905 as a junior engineer sailing in the *Querimba* which he had helped to build at Doxford and Sons yard at Sunderland. He took part in the BI Sports in Calcutta on 30 December 1905 and won the 100 yards foot race for which he received a handsome coffee pot in what I believe is called rupee silver. This is now in my possession.

My father served on several ships before his first

### Reunion

Dear Sir,

Thank you for printing my letter, "Where are all those stewardesses?"

Unfortunately there was a misprint - we were paid £7 a month not £17. I would have thought myself a millionaire had I got that.

How I wish we could have a reunion so that I could meet some of my old sea friends. Perhaps one day there might be one.

Mrs IJ Cousins (nee Lundy)  
10 Malwood Avenue,  
Lordswood,  
Southampton SO1 6RW.

return to England in 1910, when he married. He returned after leave and served in the BI until 1938 when he retired.

During that time he was torpedoed when serving in the *Golconda* in 1915. From early 1916 until February 1922 he served as 2nd engineer with the *Manora* sailing mainly on the home run to India and return. He was appointed chief engineer to the *Australia* (a former German ship) in March 1922 and sailed on her until March 1934. After one voyage on the *Nerbudda* he joined the *Devon* and remained with her until July 1938.

I think he spent many happy years when the last three named ships were used as cadet training ships and many a time during his 34 years of retirement did he recount tales of his life in the BI. To him it was the company "par excellence".

Incidentally, my elder brother Martin, who is now in charge of the Docks and Harbour at Sharpness, was a cadet with the *Nardana* in the early thirties (Alex Duncan was sailing on her at the time) and he stayed in the BI until about 1943, having had some peripatetic times in the war.

My cousin, Billy Embleton OBE, also a former BI officer will be well known to many of your readers, especially the engineer officers who have studied for their "tickets" at South Shields.

Garnet Embleton  
49 Linden Road  
Northallerton  
Yorkshire



The 24 456 grt *Orcades II*

## Our voyage to Durban in *Orcades II*

Dear Sir,

A few weeks ago I read somewhere (in a travel magazine I believe) about the cruises being arranged for your liner *Orcades*, and my memory flew back to the time when I sailed as a passenger in that other *Orcades* - but not on a pleasure cruise, I regret to say.

We were a naval draft from Chatham, who were rudely upheaved from our familiar and cosy surroundings in barracks, pitchforked on a dark night into a train which seemed to take the most circuitous route to deposit us dishevelled, dirty, tired and hungry on the dockside at Liverpool.

There in front of our bewildered and bleary eyes was the ship that for the next few weeks was to be our home, the *Orcades*. To us, mostly from the cities, just out of training and therefore new to ships, she seemed enormous, with her great length, cliff-like sides and towering superstructure. All about her was a bedlam of

noise and activity as long columns of men from all services slowly filed up the gangways. Cranes were busily swinging huge crates of stores aboard and most of us were beginning to wonder what we had let ourselves in for. We need not have worried, once aboard we were taken in hand by members of the crew who showed us to our various troop-decks and kindly and patiently sorted out the problems, answered our multitudinous questions as well as they could and generally made us feel welcome.

All too soon we left the dock and anchored in the river until the rest of the ships that were to form our convoy finished loading and then the time came for us to finally put to sea.

Most of us were too busy sorting ourselves out to notice much about our departure: it was all done

quietly and with little fuss

anyway. The days on passage seemed endless but they were enlivened somewhat with boat drills and the interminable lectures on some of the most bizarre subjects ever delivered to budding warriors such as ourselves. Our draft, being signal ratings, offered our services as bridge watchkeepers, and we were warmly welcomed. It gave us a chance to bone up on International code and Mersigs.

We were the envy of most others taking passage because obviously we were in a position to know more of what was going on. Off watch we would be plied with all kinds of eager questions and we, exaggerating our own importance would spin the most atrocious tales, which did no harm but gave us a lot of fun.

After a brief stop at Freetown we finally reached our destination, Durban. Imagine our delight on disembarking at Point Docks to see the abundance of fruits being offered to all and sundry, plenty of food in the shops, no queuing or rationing and the city ablaze with light at night. It seemed like another world to us fresh from the rigours of life in England in those dark days.

We were finally sent to Pietermaritzberg to a naval camp and while there we were dismayed to read in a local newspaper a very bare announcement of the *Orcades* being sunk, presumably on her way home.

The news saddened many of us because we had been on Christian name terms with many of the crew, who when off duty, would come down to our messes and have a chat and spin a yarn or two, and they had become firm friends of ours during the voyage.

W E Lawrence  
50 White Lion Street  
Islington  
London N1

## A trip to Newcastle with the Tyne Tees Company

Dear Sir,

The story about the Tyne Tees Shipping Company in the last issue of *Wavelength* reminded me of a trip I made to Newcastle in one of the company's vessels in either 1899 or 1900.

I sailed from Free Trade Wharf, London and remember my parents saying that the Tyne Tees vessels carried quite a number of passengers then.

With regard to the correspondence in previous issues about the Egypt, I got influenza homeward bound from Bombay in ss *China* and although Captain Scott, then Marine Super at Tilbury sent me a telegram to join Egypt, because of my illness I was unable to do so.

I joined the Orient Line in 1910 and my first ship after sail, was *Orontes* under Captain Healey. I then joined *Ophir* for three or four years and then *Omar*, *Lahore*, *Orvieto* and *Moldavia* in which I spent 13 years.

Richard Armstrong  
34 Stokesay Road  
Brooklands  
Wellington  
Telford  
Shropshire

## Tyne Tees trippers - I can still see them now....

Dear Sir,

Your story about the Tyne Tees Steam Shipping Company (*Wavelength* no 8) brought back many memories as I was a checker at Free Trade Wharf for 32 years.

I remember very clearly the boats from Newcastle belonging to the Tyne Tees Company being berthed at the wharf and I can still see the passengers going down to the jetty to board the boats you mention.

What a wonderful time it was and what wonderful memories I have. I will be 91 on 17 April.

Arthur (Bill) Blaney  
19 Stanley Road South  
Rainham  
Essex

## The sinking of *Strathallan*

Dear Sir,

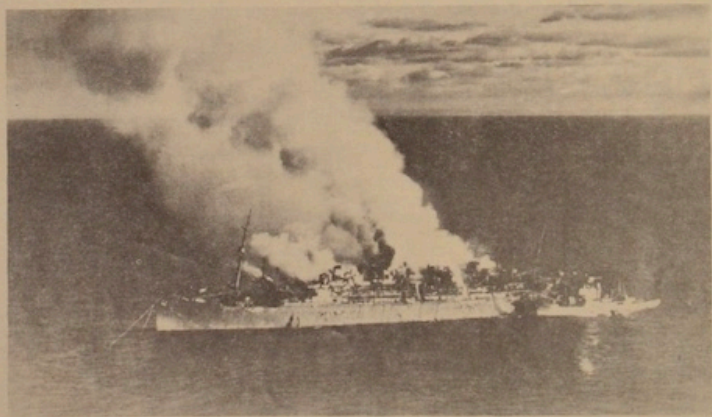
I wonder if you have a photograph of the *Strathallan* taken after she had been torpedoed in 1942.

I sailed in the vessel on her last voyage on my way to join the 1st Army in North Africa.

We left Princess Palace Pier, Greenock on 12 December 1942 and were torpedoed on 21 December in the Mediterranean about 80 miles from the Oran.

I got picked up by the destroyer *Verity* as it broke daylight and was later told in North Africa that a Hudson aircraft took a photograph of the *Strathallan* when she was burning.

B Greening  
Ex Gunner 63 LAA Regt.  
141 Queensway,  
Craven Vale,  
Brighton,  
Sussex.



*Strathallan* blazing fiercely just before she sank in December 1942. She was carrying 4,000 British and American troops and 250 nurses.

That 'O' ship - readers' views are on page four

## That 'O' ship is Orford just before a cruise

Dear Sir,  
The 'O' ship is either Orford or Orontes.

Both were present off the Isle of Wight at the Schneider Trophy Race in 1929.

Orford was having a turn round period at Southampton and was offered to the Royal Aero Club as headquarters of the race.

Orontes was about to start on a fortnight's cruise on the day of the race and the starting time was adjusted by a few hours in order to give the passengers the opportunity of seeing the display.

### Could it be the Orontes

Dear Sir,  
DH Fife was quite correct — the date was 1930 and the vessel either Orontes or Orford in use as a "grandstand" for the weekend.

I have a dated picture of two "O" ships taken from Ryde esplanade at night showing the illuminations and in the distance the lights of Southsea.

G E Frost  
Stainers Cottage  
Brichingard Lane  
Sturminster Newton  
Dorset

### ...or the Otranto

Dear Sir,  
I am pretty sure she is Otranto (20,026 tons gross), built by Vickers Armstrong in 1929. In appearance she was similar to her sister Orantes (20,097 tons gross): the latter however, was readily identifiable to the critical eye by her slightly raking stem. Otranto had a straight bow. Apart from her general appearance, I recognise her by her king posts, fore and aft.

You will have noticed that she is at anchor, presumably in Southampton Water, and is dressed overall. I wonder whether she was being used as a "grandstand" for the Schneider Trophy race?

C D Roberts  
Combehurst  
Frant  
Tunbridge Wells

### ...or is it Orsova?

Dear Sir,  
I joined Orsova under Captain Owens on 5 August 1922. The Schneider Trophy was raced for in Naples that year on about 12 August. We were there. Could this be it?

A E Wakefield  
19 Maple Road  
Grays  
Essex

was visiting Orontes at the time and experienced the thrill of the race.

In Ralph Barker's book *The Schneider Trophy Races* published in 1971, there is a photograph on page 177 showing the Italian machine M52 with a figure 4 painted on its side.

The machine in Mr Fife's photograph is clearly the same machine and the figure 4 is clearly discernible.

The Italian pilot's name was Dal Molin.

I would suggest that as the ship in Mr Fife's picture is dressed overall it is in fact the Orford.

A J Bott  
(former director, Anderson Green)



Never has a photograph prompted so much correspondence as this one which appeared in our last issue. D. H. Fife, who loaned it to us, asked if anyone could identify the ship. A selection of readers' thoughts and views appear on this page and another problem picture is on page 18.

## Yes - I think it's Orford in 1929

Dear Sir,  
In the first week of September 1929 at Spithead the UK made its first defence

of the Schneider cup which it had won in Italy the year before.

The Orient Company had Orford and Orontes anchored near the end of Ryde Pier. One was let to the general public the other to members of the Royal Aero Club.

From my memory of her profile I would think the ship shown is Orford, which was later bombed and burnt out off Marseilles in 1940.

I would agree that the aeroplane is an Italian Macchi contender. They had had a lot of engine trouble with their planes and I think only one took off in the actual race, which must be the one shown, and I don't think it completed the course.

A I Anderson  
Summers  
West Clandon  
Surrey

## I say it's Ormonde

Dear Sir,  
The 'O' class vessel published in *Wavelength* no. 8 is the Ormonde.

I started at the Orient Line in 1925 and have been in shipping ever since. The first ship I worked on was the old Orsova then the Orveito followed by the Osterley.

The ship in the picture stands out as the Ormonde because the other three ships mentioned had cut away sterns.

J R Kemp  
49 Long Lane  
Grays  
Essex

## Orvieta ?

Dear Sir,  
I was on a paddle steamer in the Solent for the Schneider Trophy race in 1925? and recollect the official stand was an Orient ship which must have been either Osterley, Orsova or Orvieta.

A check on sailing list will determine which was in home waters on that day and thus name the photograph.

R J Abbott  
40 Tongdean Road  
Hove  
Sussex

## My first voyage - to Australia and back in a sailing ship

Dear Sir,  
In the January *Wavelength* there is a story about Captain Granger-Brown's first voyage in the Forteviot.

He might be interested to know that I too made my first voyage in her after Pangbourne and then the St. George. This was in 1921/22 when she had been taken from the Germans after the Great War and sold to James Bell and Company of Hull. She was renamed Bellands.

I joined her as an apprentice in St Nazaire, France and we made a very good passage out to Port Lincoln, South Australia in ballast (2000 tons sand) in 84 days. We returned home to Belfast from Sydney with 5000 tons of wheat in 108 days.

## Greetings friends

Dear Sir,  
My wife and I have just returned to England from Australia, where I was stores officer for P & O in Fremantle.

During my 22 years service, first with Macdonald Hamilton and Co, then P & O Orient and finally P & O Lines it was our pleasure to meet some real dinki-dinkies, too many to mention by name.

Would you please pass to all of them our hearty greetings.

Fred G Hall  
7 Landsdown Road,  
Seaford BN25 3JS,  
Sussex.

There I left her as she was placed under the Norwegian flag but I saw her again a year later in Rotterdam when she was sold for scrap.

It is interesting to note that a year ago I complained to the local postmaster that two parcels I sent to Australia took 80 and 90 days to get there. I was able to quote that 50 years ago I got out there in less time in a sailing ship.

I see on page 15 DH Fife asks for identification of a photograph. No doubt this is

## A prize for the Royal Navy

Dear Sir,  
Those readers who, like myself, were most interested to read Captain HC Granger-Brown's account of his apprenticeship in sail (January, page 13), might also like to know the subsequent history of the vessels in which he served.

As Captain Granger-Brown states, the Forteviot was sold in 1910/11. Her purchasers were the German firm of Vinnen, who renamed her Werner Vinnen, under which name she was captured by the Royal Navy in the early part of the First World War, and taken in to Sierra Leone as a prize.

Under the British flag again, she was renamed Yawry until about 1917 when she was taken over by Bell & Co. who again changed the name, this time to

the Orontes in 1930 when she was flagship for the Schneider Trophy Air Race over the Solent.

That does not seem so long ago, to me anyway, that she should be referred to as an "old O class". It is less than 20 years since she was scrapped. We didn't have lettered classes in the Orient Line — they have all begun with 'O' for over 50 years.

George R Grandage  
Nutwalk  
Holford  
Bridgewater  
Somerset

Bellands. She kept this name and ownership until the end, although latterly she sailed under Norwegian colours, apparently an early "flag of convenience".

Her last passage was in 1925, when she brought Australian grain from Port Lincoln to Falmouth, for orders, in 121 days. After proceeding to Sunderland to discharge, she went to shipbreakers at Blyth.

Captain Granger-Brown's second ship, the British Isles, also survived the war, and was reported in the 1920's as still being afloat in Argentine waters, although under a different name and apparently not in active commission.

Rick Hogben  
GCD/OPS/AI  
7 Princes Court,  
Pilgrim's Lane,  
Hampstead,  
London, N.W.3.

## Off to North Shields by boat and train

Dear Sir,  
I was very interested to read the article on the Tyne-Tees Shipping Co in the January issue. I had often wondered how the company was faring and am sorry that it has fallen on such lean times.

Seeing the picture of Hadrian sent my thoughts back to 1926 or thereabouts, to my early days in the West End Office. At that time I used to pay a visit, during my precious two weeks leave, to an uncle and aunt (she made a truly delicious ginger pudding) who lived at North Shields, and what better way to go there than by sea?

Among the many travel agents who called at the office then was one H Bland of Escombe, McGrath and Co, whom I am sure older readers will remember. He often worked late, and when in need of refreshment he would partake, at The Two Chairmen, of a bottle or two of Russian stout, a very potent beverage, I believe.

It was to Bland that I turned for information regarding a passage by sea to Newcastle, and in due course, he gave me a return ticket — he was able to obtain for me a reduction in the fare for which I was very grateful — out by Hadrian, home by Bernicia, and instructions to embark at, I think, Ratcliffe Steps, Ratcliffe Way, just off Commercial Road, or perhaps it was East India Dock Road.

Both were splendid vessels with excellent accommodation, and most suitable for the twenty-four hour run between London and Newcastle. They sailed with clockwork regularity; indeed Tynesiders were reputed to set their watches by them when they passed between Tynemouth piers to a resounding blast on the siren. "There's the London Boat" they said.

To go by sea along Britain's coast was for me a delight. We sailed, I think, at about 4 pm, winding a tortuous way down the Thames towards the Estuary; then past the Mouse, Maplin and Nore Lightships. At dusk, and through the night, the lights of coastal towns twinkled to port, with various lighthouses flashing their warning and beckoning us on our voyage.

When daylight came the Wash was astern, and the Humber and Spurn Head coming up abeam, and so on to the great bulk of Flamborough Head, a magnificent sight, like some massive bastion jutting out into the North Sea.

Later we entered the Tyne, to the traditional blast on our siren, and eventually tied up at the Town Quay Newcastle. From here I took the train to North Shields and to a warm greeting from various aunts and uncles an assortment of femal cousins.

O L Bugg  
Faircroft,  
Mapledrakes Road,  
Ewhurst,  
Surrey



Smiles, puzzlement and wonderment as Santa Claus listens to the Christmas hopes of some of the 112 youngsters who attended Jarvis-Cranmer's yuletide party. The kids went home full of cream buns and jelly clutching a present from Santa. Held at P & O's Princes Dock premises in Liverpool, it was organised and paid for by the shop stewards, works' committee and drivers. Santa Claus asked Jack Dingwall - Chief Catering Supervisor of P & O Short Sea Shipping - if he'd mind looking after his job for a day!

## Pandair men to visit Australia

Two key executives from Pandair Freight - Managing Director, Derek Spice and the newly-appointed Director-Pacific, Tom White - are to undertake a two-week tour of Pandair's branches and facilities in Australia and New Zealand. Although both have made several previous visits to Australasia, this is Tom White's first visit since being made responsible for Pandair's developments in the Pacific area. Pandair's Regional Manager - Australasia, Graeme Walker, is one of the Pandair officials with whom they will be holding discussions.

## Belfast that fast!

An Irishman, returning home from visiting his brother in Ashby de la Zouch, phoned up the Belfast Steamship Company's ferry enquiry service. "How long will it take the boat from Liverpool to Belfast?" "Just a minute..." said the girl in the Enquiries Office. "Well I'll be!" he replied. "That's even faster than the plane."

## Freight services grow in EEC

P & O Freight Forwarders (Benelux) has made several new management appointments and opened two new offices in Belgium in a move to expand its EEC operations. New manager of the Netherlands' area is Mr K van Zijderveld, who will be responsible for all operations of GSN Transport and Global Transport in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, plus GSN Transport Harlingen. The two new offices at Doornik (Tournai) and Genk will be managed by Mr Leon Gosseye and Mr Theodorus Indenkneef, respectively. A third office will soon be opened in Brussels with Mr J Bonny in charge. P & O Freight Forwarders (Benelux) now has a total of 11 offices - seven in Belgium and four in the Netherlands - under the overall control of General Manager, Mr Frank Overlaet, who is based in Rotterdam.

## Veteran Pathfinder off to Texas

It seems the American Civil War is not yet over - or some folks haven't realised it's still going on. Pandair Freight found itself helping to "supply" arms to the Confederate Air Force recently when its Gloucester branch was asked to airlift a Mosquito fighter bomber to Houston, Texas via TWA. The Mosquito, a veteran of the wartime Pathfinders, target towing and two historical films on "633 Squadron" and "Mosquito Squadron" came from the Skyfame Aircraft Museum at Gloucester Airport. Mosquito TA 719's flying days are far from over, for after uncrating at Houston it will take to the air with another Mosquito during further film making in Texas.

# One man's view of a life on the ocean wave

By L. F. Sinclair

One doesn't have to be insane to choose seagoing as a career but it does help.

Who but a congenital idiot would choose to spend the greater part of his life uncomfortably perched in a heaving mass of steel and wood which remains on the surface of the sea solely by virtue of various dubious scientific rules of density and stability; separated from his Maker by a mere three quarters of an inch of steel! Who but a sentimental halfwit would find romance in the bloodcurdling sound of a ship's siren, the sleep defying throb of a huge diesel engine, the endless maddening clamour of unsynchronised hammers chipping rust from steel decks, the eternal creaking of steel and wood against each other and the sick making swing of masts against the sky.

Only a raving lunatic would accept that three quarters of an inch of steel is sufficient protection against jagged rocks, pounding seas, pack ice, sharks and the murderous bows of all the other lunatics careering about the oceans of the world in equally fragile shells.

Lastly, who but a mindless moron would voluntarily remove himself for days, sometimes weeks and months on end, from music, football, books, good food, drink and female company! (The priorities of this list are open to various permutations).

So we establish that our seaman, or would-be seaman, is a courageous, independent, self-sufficient, adventurous 'twit'. What then are the benefits, if any, of this selfless devotion to keeping open Britain's seaways. What recompense does our starry eyed 'twit' derive from pounding back and forth across the oceans to bring the silks and spices of the Orient to the markets of Oswaldtwistle and Birkenhead?

Firstly, one might say he sees 'how the other half live'. This is something of a dubious benefit as they invariably seem to be living better than 'his half'.

Secondly he receives the sinister bounty of cheap liquor and cigarettes. This enables him to become a 'plonkie' or a chronic chest case at far less expense and considerably more quickly than his shore based contemporaries. What he never seems to realise is that this is also part of a well laid plot on the part of the shipowners to shorten seamen's lives and thus reduce the period (if any) which remains as pensionable.

Lastly, but not least, he sees the sea - millions of square miles of it - in all its windy, grey, salt wetness and (give or take the odd peculiarly shaped wave) - if you've seen one sea you've seen the lot.

The occasional blob of smoke on the horizon only serves to indicate to him that he is not unique in his mindless obsession with vast lumps of water.

There are times of course when even the heroic stoicism of the seaman is strained to breaking point, such as when a well refreshed and conscientious master rings the alarm bells at 2.00 a.m. to achieve a 'realistic' boat drill. Then there are the quayside boat drills when, after rowing round the dock or harbour for ten minutes, our sensitive hero reconciles the gurgling water round his shins with the fact that someone has forgotten to ship the plug.

Again our hero may be a deckhand who has just finished painting the docking bridge aft, or a steward who

has just hung out a line of white jackets to dry. Either way his distress will be no less when an equally sensitive engineering colleague down the engine room chooses that moment to pull the only lever in the whole ship which will cause the funnel to discharge three hundredweight of oily black smuts over both paintwork and jackets.

He may be sailing through the Red Sea for the first time, still looking upon the sun as the same benign, health giving orb that he had known in Clacton and New Brighton. Three hours later he is in the ship's hospital being treated for third degree burns and pneumonia.

It is times such as these, coupled with the odd attacks of prickly heat, dhoobi rash, gippo tummy, sea sickness, homesickness or monsoon madness which bring the first wrinkles to his broad seafaring brow. Deep in his little seafaring brain stir the first tiny misgivings. Should he have settled for being a banker, a wall of death rider, or a docker?

At this stage he begins to realise that a ship is designated "she" because, like a woman, she is unmanageable, unpredictable, as hard as iron, and only safe when she is tied up.

Despite all setbacks, however, our buoyant little mariner will smile bravely and murmur to himself, "Everything will be better tomorrow". We shall arrive in Bomcutta or is it Singakong and I shall escape for a few hours from this bullying bosun/2nd engineer/chief officer/head waiter/chief steward/captain etc. (everyone is bullied by someone).

With the childlike optimism of which only a

seaman is capable he will also murmur to himself, "Tomorrow I will get a letter from my mother/girl friend/father/the vicar or my friendly bank manager. But does he?"

You who have spent cloistered lives ashore in houses steady as rocks, snug at night in beds, whose daily letters flip through letterboxes with the regularity of a cow fed on All Bran, might think it should be a joyful occasion when our idiot hero is handed 18 letters on arrival in Liverpool. Only when you were told that they all bore Liverpool postmarks - that they were all written by his ever loving wife who lives half a mile away in Bootle and that they have followed our hero across the world and back. Only then would you appreciate the tears of rage and frustration that are streaming down his manly idiot face into his 'Pig and Whistle' beer.

Too often the letters and parcels, which mean so much to a seaman with half the world between him and his home, are at the mercy of agents, clerks, ship chandlers, office boys and pilots.

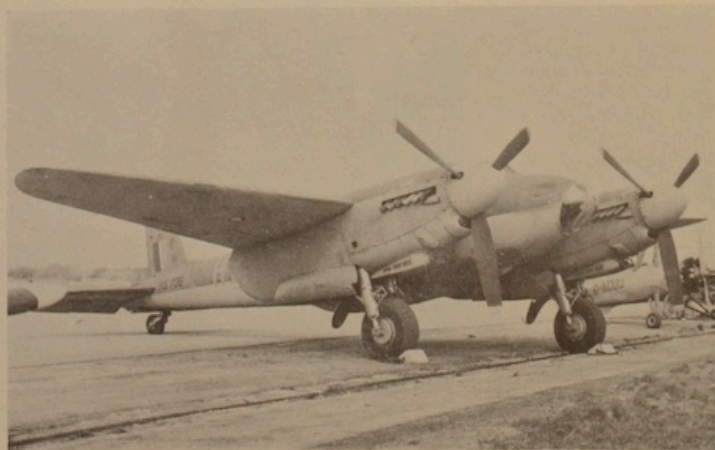
Some of these are conscientious and prompt with the mail in their care; others are abysmally careless and cynical about forwarding or delivering the all important letters.

Where else does our moronic mariner benefit over his land locked friends? Where else is he rewarded over and above his fellow men for being more adventurous - for his daring and courage in the face of tempest and foreign devils - where indeed?

Let us take a situation common to every seaman and his vessel: They are both in drydock. Half a mile away across the docks will be one or more office blocks; giant altars to progress, of steel and glass. Three thousand miles away at Cape Kennedy the Americans are sending yet another man to the moon for yet another 56 lbs of rock. Jets will be screaming overhead to land in short hours at far away capitals. The mess room radios and goggle boxes will be spewing forth their instant news from the four corners of the earth. At this moment our hero wriggles uncomfortably and pushes aside his sextant, his bucket, or his big end (depending on his department).

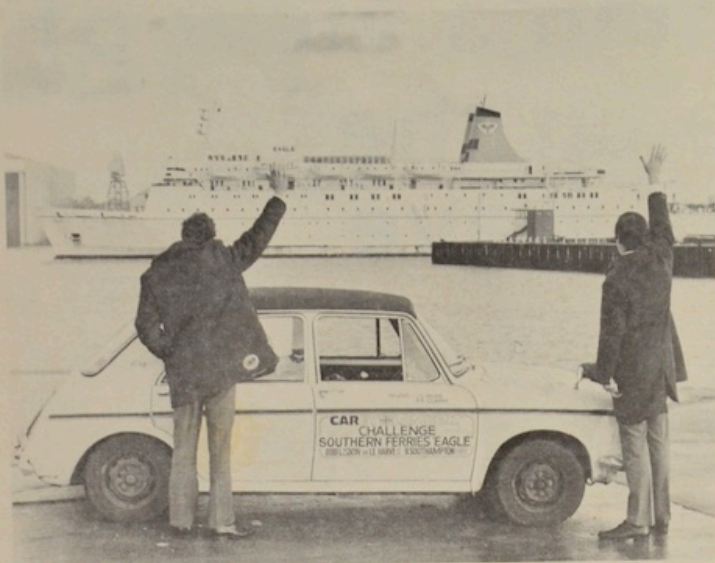
Yes - you've guessed right - he wants to go to the loo - nothing complicated, just a straightforward visit to the toilet. So what? you might say. A quick trip down the alleyway, through the appropriate door, wash hands and back to the job in two minutes flat, but oh no, not in drydock dear reader, not on your maritime nelly.

This is the equivalent of "the train is standing in the



Continued on page 7.

# It's much quicker by road



Yes, it is quicker overland if you drive non-stop round-the-clock! John Howe and Peter Clarke proved it recently by driving their Austin 1300 GT from Lisbon to Le Havre - 1,200 gruelling miles in under 30 hours. They had to average over 40 mph in order to reach Le Havre in time to catch the Normandy Ferries' night ship which brought them back to Southampton before Eagle. Southern Ferries' Eagle left Lisbon at the same time and arrived back only a few hours after John and Peter. With a speed of 21 knots, she covered the distance in 42 hours. Meals on board are included in the fare, as are a shower and toilet in all cabins - not to mention two full nights' sleep! Our picture above shows John and Peter greeting Eagle on its arrival in Southampton. In the other picture Eagle's master, Captain Gordon Renshave is seen congratulating John.

## Ronald Winter dies at the age of 54

Ronald James Winter, Secretary P & O Ferrymasters Sector of E & A T Division, died at the age of 54 on the 16 January.

He joined Ferrymasters in September, 1970 and subsequently joined P & O Ferrymasters, having previously been Secretary of Ortho Pharmaceuticals Limited (a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson) for the preceding ten years.

Educated at City of London College and Military College of Science, he saw war service with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers 1940/1945.

A Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries, he was also sometime Chairman of Mid-Bucks Productivity Council.

He leaves a widow, married son and daughter.

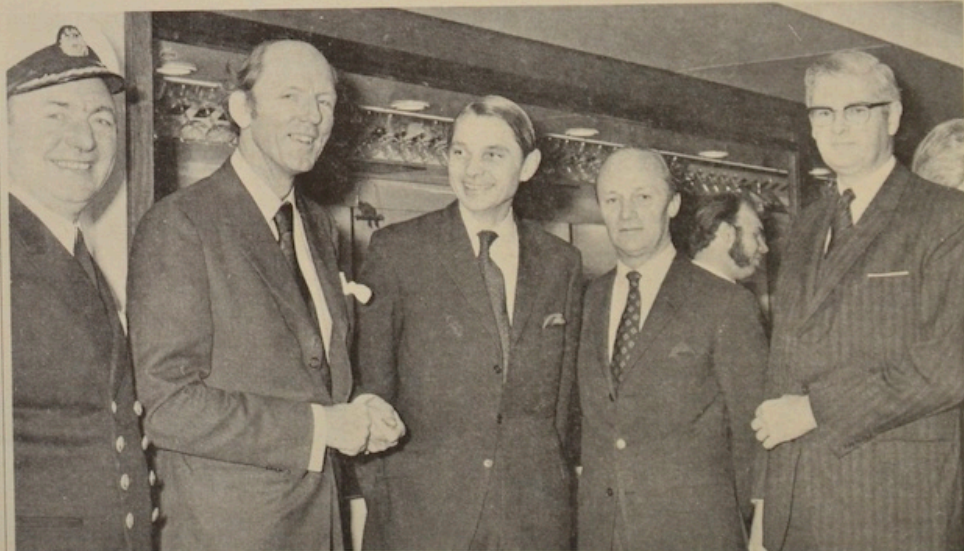
# Pat sets off to see the world



Pat Stanbrook used to be a receptionist in the office of a national tobacco company at Southampton. From her desk she was able to see travellers making their way to the liners which leave Southampton for all parts of the world. One day she decided to go to sea with the Merchant Navy and see some of the world. She signed up as a stewardess on the Normandy car ferry Dragon, and soon found herself visiting Portugal, Southern Ireland and France. Pictured here during one of her breaks on the Southampton-Le Havre holiday route, she chats with ship's painter, John Olechnowicz.

**More E & A T D news appears on pages 12 and 13**

# Managing director's visit



Mr A B Marshall visited the north west early last month to inspect ships and shore establishments. He is seen here on board Ulster Prince with (from left) the ship's master, Captain James Fullerton; Mr. G W Brinyard, managing director, Merse Docks and Harbour Company; Mr John R Turner, General Manager, P & O Short Sea Shipping, and Mr J B Winter-Lotime Fleet Manager, P & O Short Sea Shipping.

# Pam wins contest - thanks to the floating pound

Pamela Tiller, Supervisor of the Travel Department in GSN Edinburgh, has had a run of luck which has won her three prizes at travel trade promotions, including two flights to Zurich.

At a social evening of the Womens' Travel Club, she won the best hat competition with a hat made out of a poster of Uganda sailing on a pound - "The Floating Pound".

She is rather reticent about the other two prizes, but it was ascertained that these were won for blowing the Alphorn, the large Swiss horn and for naming the drinks associated with many different countries.

No significance should be attached to her ability to win such prizes!!

# Pandair men on the move

Pandair Freight has made two new appointments at Liverpool.

Stephen Skelhorn, formerly Operations Manager with Johnson's Air Freight, has been appointed Imports Supervisor, while Peter Hannah, with Pandair's Liverpool Export Department for the last three years, has been appointed Export Supervisor.

Both men took over their new posts on 1 February.

# Two portholes cave in as heavy seas pound Eagle

Both passengers and crew came in for praise when Southern Ferries' passenger car ferry, Eagle arrived in Southampton in January after battling her way

through mountainous seas and 70 mph plus winds.

Captain Gordon Renshawe said the passengers were "absolutely marvellous", the crew did a wonderful job and so did the engineers who kept the vessel going.

Captain Renshawe said the worst phase of the storm came after they had passed St. Vincent, leaving the slight protection which the land afforded.

"Our bridge is about 60ft above the water, but from it we could not see over the top of some of the seas," he said. "The storm varied from force 10 (55.63 mph) to force 11 (64.72 mph).

"The worst roll was about 24 degrees each way. Two portholes were smashed and the incoming sea water spoiled carpets in a number of cabins.

"Some sea water went down the funnel vent, and damaged a generator. There were no serious injuries. One woman passenger fell from a chair and grazed her head and on the vehicle deck a caravan was dented."

Before leaving the ship each of the 280 passengers was presented with a certificate recording that they had passed through the storm.

Eagle later sailed for St Nazaire for her annual overhaul.

★★★★★

Mary Cochrane and Pamela Tiller, Travel Supervisors in GSN Edinburgh, have been elected Members of the Institute of Travel Agents.

## Arthur Bell retires



Arthur Bell, Special Duties Officer, P & O Short Sea Shipping, Liverpool, retired at the end of February after over 50 years' service.

Arthur joined the Tyne-Tees Steam Shipping Co in Newcastle on Tyne on 11 December 1922 and after working in the Passenger Department for two years transferred to the German Department. It was during this time he decided to learn German and this was to become one of the reasons for his being enlisted into the Intelligence Corps during the last war.

After the war, Tyne-Tees had the job of rebuilding their continental trade and Arthur was appointed Continental Manager to supervise the Dutch and Belgian trades and to establish an office in Hamburg from where he was to operate.

Arriving in the devastated port of Hamburg on 1 April 1946 with only a brief case, Arthur, being a resourceful individual, and with the aid of the British Military, managed to build a small office from where Continental Seaways GmbH was born. He became resident partner of the company and besides the operation of Tyne-Tees trades acted as general agents and brokers representing liner services.

In 1959 he returned to the UK as manager of Link Line, Scotland and in 1960 was posted to Liverpool head office of Coast Lines as Special Duties Officer.

Arthur has always been very fond of the German way of life and has thoughts on teaching the language and making odd visits to the country. Now he has retired he would like to visit one of his daughters who lives in Havana, Cuba.



## Crew buys guide dog

Eagle's officers and crew have raised £500 to buy a guide dog to aid the blind. The cash was collected during the past few months by popping odd coins and tips into a couple of pickle jar piggy banks housed in the officers' ward-room and the crew's "Pig" or Mess. Handing over the cheque at the Eagle's Social Club dance, Captain Gordon Renshawe said that the ferry's officers and crew had now raised a total of £740 for charity. In appreciation of the gift, Mrs Bonetti, local organiser of Guide Dogs for the Blind, presented Eagle with a silver model of a guide dog and also a picture of the dog they had bought, aptly named Eagle. The cheque was accepted on behalf of the organisation by Miss Betty Bond, now blind, who formerly worked as a stewardess with Cunard. Our picture above shows (from left) Eagle Committee members, Mike Day (Peak Steward), Ray Bezant (Relief Bosun), Pedro Haigh (AB) and Malcolm Pryn (Leading Hand), with Mrs Bonetti and Miss Bond. Our other picture shows Mike Day receiving the photo of Eagle from Mrs Bonetti.



## Death of GSN's oldest retired master

Captain R Campbell Watson, the General Steam Navigation Company's oldest retired master, died on 27 January in his 90th year.

Andrew Hutton, GSN's marine superintendent until 1954, writes: During the First World War, Captain Watson was awarded the OBE while serving with the Nigerian Marine.

He relieved me as master of the ss Guillemot in December 1928 and was awarded the MBE in the last war when master of the ss Mavis.

The Mavis was sunk off Calais - but not before she had shot down one of the dive bombers.

## John's life of leisure

Colleagues and friends of John Veltom, who spent 43 years with the Coast Lines and P & O Groups, will be glad to learn that he has now settled down to a life of retired leisure in his Hertfordshire home.

Eager to keep in touch with all his old friends, John will welcome letters addressed to 14, Mayfield Close, Harpenden, Herts. Knowing his prolific pen, no one should want for a reply for long!

And for the record, one of Wavelength's shamed writers is now sitting in a corner on the penitent stool for spelling John's name incorrectly in the last edition. Write out a thousand times

# A life on the ocean wave

Continued from page 5

station". First our seamen needs "the key". Having found it often at length and with some difficulty, he leaves the ship via the grease caked abortion that is laughingly called a gangway.

By the time he reaches the quay his discomfort will have become an urgency but he still has some hundred yards or so of quay to traverse through mud, dunnage, discarded wire ropes and all the assorted junk of a thousand ship repairs.

By the time he reaches the trio of brick outhouses at the end of the dock his urgency will have become agony and he still has to make sure that he isn't trying to fumble the key into a door marked "Officers only" and that the door he is trying to enter is marked "Europeans only".

Meanwhile the jets have landed at Lisbon and Paris. The American is well on his way to the moon and our

unfortunate hero shivers and sneezes his way back aboard his two, four or six million pounds worth of ship - a miracle of modern design, on which in 1973 he still cannot visit the toilet in drydock.

Drydocks however are but a temporary discomfort. Eventually and inevitably our hero will sail forth agog and receptive - impatient for the wonders and the glamour of foreign parts.

Between the dock and the locks the vessel will finally shed the last of the shore based leeches - the superintendents, the customs officers, the Board of Trade officials, the compass adjuster, the ship's chandler, the agents, the skipper's wife, the galley boy's girl friend, the union delegate and finally the last link with shore - the pilot. This is the moment for second thoughts for our budding Vasco da Gama. This is the moment when he wonders whether he will ever get accustomed to the

pitching, rolling, groaning, creaking steel world which has closed around him, where there are no back doors, and where he has to learn a strange new language to survive. Where staircases become companionways, floors become decks, ceilings become deckheads, front and back become fore and aft, left and right become port and starboard. Where even the hours of the clock have to be relevant to coincide with the tolling of a bell and watchkeeping periods.

With the aforementioned degree of optimism granted only to those who follow the sea he will step out on deck take a deep breath composed almost equally of fog and oil fumes, close his eyes and revel in a mental picture of his own personal Nirvana. This may take the form of sun-kissed Australian beaches, the oriental excitement of a Casablanca bazaar, or dancing cheek to cheek with an olive skinned beauty in a Buenos

Aires night spot.

At this moment in time only two torpedoes, a hurricane, the approach of the Graf Spee or a dive bomber attack could convince him that he has chosen the wrong career.

Only much later will he realise that one needs to be a sun-kissed Australian superman to swim in their sun-kissed surf; that the "Oriental excitement" is four-fifths Oriental odours and one-fifth Oriental pickpockets and that his "one night of love" in Buenos Aires ended in a very large bill for some very small drinks, followed by two weeks of extreme apprehension, if nothing worse.

Luckily for ships and shipping and their deskbound manipulators our hero and his like will always go to sea. There is still sufficient real magic in ships and the sea, still enough horizons to cross, to offset the odd shattered illusions.

As long as the "Southern Cross" can be seen in the night sky, as long as porpoises cavort gaily across the bows of speeding ships, as long as ships are built, men will come forward to man them and to love them and to endow each great steel shell with a personality all its own.

For every shattered illusion a ship inflicts on our hero she will repay him a hundredfold with moments of sheer magic. Only when we have choked our rivers and harbours with sewage and plastic cups, suffocated our fishes and seabirds with oil, hidden our skies in smog and poisoned our oceans with atomic waste, only then will our young men cease to go to sea.

To you who tend to forget the ships and the men who man them, between ETD and ETA I say raise tomorrow's lunchtime glass to "Absent and Seafaring Friends".

# John Leadenhall's Diary

## Lord Inchcape: old Etonian and former army major

Lord Inchcape, our new chairman, was born in December 1917 at Uckfield, Sussex and educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he gained an Honours Degree in Law. He was elected to the P & O board 21 years ago.

His grandfather, James Lyle Mackay the first Earl, was the son of a Scottish sea captain and sailing ship owner from Arbroath who went out to India as an assistant to Mackinnon Mackenzie & Company and returned to London as chairman of the British India Steam Navigation Company. He merged the BI with the P & O in 1911 and was then chairman of the P & O Group for the next 21 years.

On his death in 1932, the chairmanship of P & O passed to his son-in-law, Lord Craigmyle while his son, the second Earl of Inchcape, assumed chairmanship of the family's trading firms and was also a director and, at one time, Deputy Chairman of P & O.

The present Earl, Kenneth James William Mackay, succeeded to the title on his father's death in 1939. Two years later he married Mrs Hannay, widow of Flying Officer P C Hannay A.A.F. and daughter of Sir Richard Pease. In 1965 he married Caroline Cholmeley-Harrison. He has three children by his first marriage, Viscount Glenapp, Hon. James Mackay and Lady Lucinda Mackay and an adopted son, Anthony Mackay.

Lord Inchcape joined the army direct from Cambridge, and was with the 12th Lancers in the B.E.F. and at Dunkirk. He then served in the Middle East and Italy rising to the rank of Major in the 27th Lancers and later he was with the Military Government in Vienna.

After his demobilisation in 1945, Lord Inchcape spent some time in the Calcutta office of Mackinnon Mackenzie & Co, who at that time were managing agents of the British India Steam Navigation Company.

He returned to Great Britain in 1948, and as senior partner commenced to play an active part in the management of Gray Dawes & Co, which was the linking firm in London with the wide-spread merchanting and industrial enterprises in India, East Africa, the Gulf and Australia.

Gray Dawes & Co was incorporated as a limited company in 1952 and in 1958 was acquired together with Duncan Macneill & Co, St Mary Axe Securities and the overseas trading companies, by Inchcape & Co, of which company Lord Inchcape became chairman.

Following the merger with the Borneo Company in 1966, the Inchcape Group interests spread into Malaysia,

Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Western Australia and the Caribbean, and to some extent in Canada, and since then further acquisitions have taken the group into Ethiopia, Japan, Nigeria and the United States.

From 1963 until 1965 Lord Inchcape served as chairman with the Council for Middle East Trade. He is president of The Commonwealth Society for the Deaf and president of the Royal India, Pakistan & Ceylon Society.

In addition to his appointment as chairman of P & O and his existing chairmanship of Inchcape & Co and other group directorships, Lord Inchcape is at present a vice chairman of the Burmah Oil Co and a director of British Petroleum Co, the Standard and Chartered Banking Group, Commonwealth Development Finance Co, Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance Co, South India Shipping Corporation and various trust companies.

He is a member of Brooke's, Buck's, Turf, City of London and Oriental Clubs and his pastimes are all country sports and recreations.

His residential address in England is Quendon Park, Saffron Waldon, Essex and his family home in Scotland is at Glenapp Castle, Ayrshire.



## 90 year olds served BI for 82 years

I was fortunate enough last month to visit Mr James Duncan and Mr Garnet Evelyn Scott, the two BI pensioners who celebrated their 90th birthday in November.

I know all their old comrades will be pleased to learn that both are in excellent health and don't look a day over 75.

The two of them served BI for a total of 82 years and

could fill every page in this issue of *Wavelength* with their experiences. James, for example, was serving as second engineer officer in Canara when the vessel was torpedoed in August 1917.

Garnet spent almost the whole of his career at the Garden Reach Workshops, Calcutta but as second engineer officer of Katoria he was specially commended for diving several times into the

water to clear a hawser which had fouled the ship's propeller. He was also an inventor and in 1928 was awarded Rs2,000 for designing a jig for turning off excess metal on the tail of shaft liners.

Today Garnet is still very capable with his hands. And when I called on him he was just taking out of the oven a home made Christmas cake - one of five he baked for his "girl friends" in the road where he lives!

Ten month old Michelle Nicholson, daughter of 3rd Officer Michael Nicholson and his wife Brenda, was christened on board Nurjehan in Liverpool by the Reverend Terry Ranson, Chaplain to the Mersey Mission to Seamen. Michael who is serving on board the vessel said "We decided it would be more convenient for the christening to be here. I suppose it is rather unusual". Mr Ranson said: "I have christened many seamen's children but never on board a ship before". He made an entry in the official register of baptism: "Michelle Nicholson ... baptised on Nurjehan (in the Port of Liverpool)".

## Rev Bob Precious to retire

I'm sure there are many readers who would like to join me in wishing a long and happy retirement to the Rev. J R Precious who is leaving The Missions to Seamen on 31 March after over 30 years service.

Bob Precious joined the Society in 1939 after working as a deck officer in the BI. Since then he has made many friends throughout the P & O Group and if any of them are ever in Somerset he and his wife Mary would be delighted to see them at their home - East House, 33a Southover Wells.

Incidentally, quite a few P & O staff will also remember Mr and Mrs Precious son, David, who used to edit the BI News. David left P & O some months ago.

## East Coast Manager

The appointment of Jol H Dolan as US East Coast Area Manager, Passenger Division, has been announced by Mr Peter Parry.



## Soccer team's reunion

Twenty years ago Anglo Overseas Transport used to have a lively soccer team thumping goals into the net in the third division of the Dulwich League. Though they never carried home any cups, they were runners up to the league leaders more than once and gained many a medal. Nine members of that bygone team are still working with the Anglo Overseas Group and recently they got together for an evening reunion in London. Pictured here, left to right, are John Wilden, Managing Director of the Anglo Overseas Group, Bernard Searle, John Jones, Bernard Palmer, E G (Buck) Buckland, Bill Masters, David Packer, George Bartlett and Sid Cumber.

P F Finch tells us about a voyage he made in a little coastal tramp – a trip which was supposed to last three weeks but took six !

# This was a cruise I'd like to do again...

One doesn't often get a three weeks Cruise extended for three weeks for the cost of rations only, but it happened to me. In case present Cruising enthusiasts are envious I would say that it was not the sort of Cruise that would satisfy modern needs.

I retired from business life on a Friday night having arranged with a kindly Glasgow Shipowner to join one of his ships on the Monday to learn a little more about Marine life in the raw so to speak. I said to my wife "I'm off to the Kattegat next week; the ship will probably go on to the Baltic for timber before coming home" and then to ease the situation "We should be back in three weeks, but you know how these little coastal tramps can be switched around". She knew!!

The ship I joined was in Cardiff. We'll call her the Ruby, though that is not her real name; she's still running. She looked forlorn, the only vessel tied up in a large empty Basin, but she loaded a full cargo, 1000 tons of Coke destined for Hoganas, a small port on the west coast of Sweden, twelve miles north of Helsingborg.

We went down the Bristol Channel on the evening tide and had quite respectable weather for early April until we were off Dover; there we ran into a North-East wind which kicked up the shallow North Sea so we took five and a half days to reach our destination.

Hoganas proved to be a typically Swedish small town, clean and modern. All the streets ran in straight parallel lines. A morning's roam round sufficed to see the place and to send a postcard to those at home to assure them that I hadn't been shipwrecked. I went back to learn that the ship had received fresh orders. We were told to go to Poland to load coal for St. Nazaire. And that started the extension and the fun too.

After a sixteen hour run light to the Gulf of Danzig we took on a Pilot off Nowy Port, the entrance to a four mile stretch of river – the Neufahrwasser – running up to Gransk (formerly Danzig) and tied up at a waiting berth. The surroundings looked very peaceful but that was quite a false impression. Poland was under Russian domination. Two sentries were posted on our gangway. That night one of them got drunk and wandered aboard. This resulted in the ship being searched rigorously for two hours. It wasn't pleasant. It appeared that sentries were not allowed to go on board a vessel. It would enable the man to change clothes with one of the crew, which could give him opportunity to get away from his dominated homeland.

Next morning, our innocence having been established we were allowed into the Coaling Basin but had to wait to load. I got ashore on a Pass, took a tram and finally walked through the outskirts of the town. They were not enlivening. The houses showed a distressing need of paint. The inhabitants looked

pale and poverty stricken. They were not averse to begging.

The centre of the town was better; it was beginning to cater for a tourist trade. There were lines of new shops but the goods in the windows looked shoddy and unattractive as well as expensive. Avoiding the big Hotels, for they do not give a true picture of every day life, one could get quite a respectable meal but food was expensive. The local Schnappes before and during eating helped digestion. I saw as much of the place as I could but the former grandeur of Danzig had gone; the crowd of workers hanging on to the tram on the return journey looked woebegone and I was glad to get back to an English atmosphere. Next day I explored the precincts of the Docks but impressions didn't alter; the other vessels loading in the Basin looked more interesting.

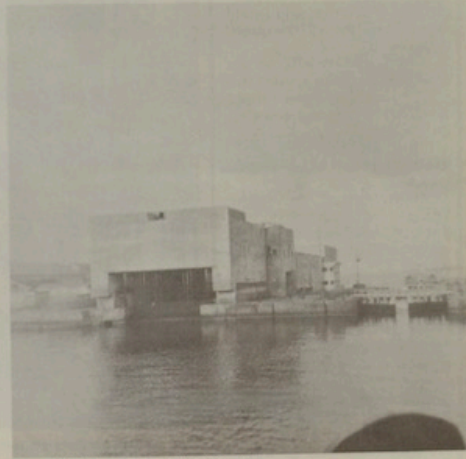
By now all on the ship noticed an occasional itching. Coal, particularly Polish coal is full of fleas and the latter when burning gives off a vile smelling smoke but that didn't worry us. We had diesels.

Ruby was due to sail that evening but the crew of another British ship loading ahead of Ruby had been ashore and returning happy and full of Schnappes got

mixed up on our Gangway with our Crew. Every man going ashore had been issued with a Pass but the sentries couldn't read, let alone read English so a really good mix up resulted in the ship being thoroughly searched again. The Agent had to come down in the early morning hours to clear up the situation. We finally sailed as dawn broke; glad to get away. Much could be written about the conditions ashore but it would be distressing and post-war Europe is a different subject. As a supernumerary I felt relieved after having my cabin searched twice.

Through the Kiel Canal, which merits separate description, and with the North-East wind urging Ruby on we got to the Loire in four and a half days. St. Nazaire lies inside the mouth of the river on the north bank. Going in we passed the buoys marking where Lancastria lay after being sunk in the bombing of 1940. It was a sad thought to realise that many hundreds of our evacuating Army lay entombed under water there. Time is a healing factor though; the years have passed.

We entered the harbour through the Lock which was rammed by Campbelltown in the raid of 1942; inside were the German Submarine Pens bombed time and again by our planes but so solidly were



An old U-boat pen at St Nazaire

they constructed that they showed little sign of damage. The concrete on top was fifteen feet thick. They now make good berths for the local trawlers.

I'd hoped that St. Nazaire would be familiar as I'd landed there more than fifty years previously but all was completely changed. The place had been bombed flat. The Casino in which nearly two hundred of us had slept for two nights had disappeared. A couple of acres of sanded area where we had lived happily in tents for a week or two now formed part of an arterial road. Reflectively I went back to the ship to find we were ordered down to Bayonne to load Sulphur. This promised to be a more interesting area to explore; and so it turned out. Bayonne was the highlight of the round voyage.

Ruby had to wait for a berth as usual and moored in the River Adour a mile downstream from the town Bridge; here we remained for four days. The whole stay was full of interest.

Bayonne has character and an atmosphere all of its own; it is quite unaffected by the fashionable aspects of Biarritz and St. Jean de Luz, a few kilometres away on the coast. It is essentially Basque, and the Basques are sturdy and independent. One recalled Henry of Navarre and wished

one had taken more interest at school in Mr Shakespeare. The whole district too, the river and the Citadel to the north of the town are reminiscent of Wellington's Army when he besieged the place in 1814 before capturing it to pass from Spain into France.

The Museum was full of interest too. Housed in an old Basque building, it included a collection of ancient implements, household and agricultural. Judging by the size and apparent weight of them the people who used them must have been a very sturdy lot; the womenfolk particularly.

The weather turned quite hot and going ashore each day in old jeans and shirt made for a pleasant life; one got away from the fleas too. An old Frenchman with whom I got in touch and spent an hour or two each day used to grow quite loquacious and informative after a few glasses of Pinard, that rough red wine, a litre of which was the daily ration of the French serviceman. He recounted how he had fought in red "pantalons" and taken part in those charges "en masse" which decimated the French Army in 1914. The wine helped my schoolboy French and we both agreed that we didn't like bayonets. Then he told me how bayonets were first used by the men of Bayonne; hence the name.

Following his direction one day I found a Coach which ran to the northern edge of the Pyrenees and on the way back stopped at a Col (Pass) St. Ignace from where a Rack Railway runs up to the summit of a hill, 3000 feet above sea level, La Rhune. Here the old French and Spanish frontier posts faced each other; the latter still stands, and standing by it one could see to the north and north-west miles of the coast of Biscay, and farther west and south the northern peaks of the Pyrenees, grim, dark, and dour, though relieved in places where pockets of snow caught gleams of light in the sun. The Pass had been used by escaping British prisoners to get through to Spain in the

Continued on page 13

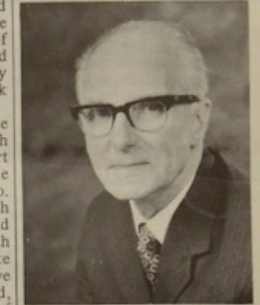
## Foreman's friends give him a drill

Colleagues of foreman Horace Herbert presented him with an electric drill when he retired from the New Medway Steam Packet Company's Acorn ship repair yard in January. The company gave him a gold watch.

Horace joined the New Medway almost 50 years ago, commencing his apprenticeship in May 1923. When this was completed on 13 May 1930 he was awarded half a day's paid holiday, which then added up to four hours at 1s 1½d per hour. In return he was expected to provide a gallon of beer for his workmates, a bottle of port wine for "more important people" and a cigar for the foreman. This he did.

After completing his time, Horace's first big job was on the sailing ship Peking which came to the yard to be converted into what is now the training ship Arethusa. This ship is moored in the River Medway and NMSPC Co has done and still is doing considerable repair and maintenance work on her.

At the time of Horace's apprenticeship the yard was mainly building and repairing wooden barges and the last



Horace Herbert

barge to be built was Terse in 1934. In 1927 the NMSPC bought from the Government two paddle minesweepers, Atherston and Melton, and these were converted at the yard to the Summer Service vessels, Queen of Kent and Queen of Thanet. The company had at this time a fleet of pleasure steamers consisting of nine ships plying from Medway and Thames piers to various resorts from Yarmouth to Dover and the yard was kept busy on maintenance and repairs.

In 1939 – the year Horace was promoted to chargehand – the pleasure steamers were hastily converted to minesweepers or other craft for Admiralty use and the yard was then concerned with the maintenance of balloon barrage craft used in the Thames estuary.

As the war continued 11 wooden hulled MFV's were built for naval service in various parts of the world. As 'D Day' drew near many barges for use in the Normandy landings were converted as required and in all these varied activities Horace, as shipwright, was closely involved.

Horace was promoted to foreman in 1968.



Ruby – P F Finch's home for six weeks

# The Centre Spread

## Cough mixture turned out to be rum

On reading the story in *Wavelength* of the demise of Strick's oldest pensioner, who incidentally was a Monkeyhanger like myself, (everyone born in Hartlepool was considered a Monkeyhanger). I was reminded of an incident concerning rum which occurred when I joined Strick's Arabistan.

I joined her as 2nd mate in December, 1919, after being demobbed from the navy. She was one of the 1914/1918 wartime built Standard ships, and at the time was lying at the buoys in Surrey Commercial dock. Fifty yards away was the rum wharf, where stacked in the open, were many barrels of overproof rum from the West Indies.

Arabistan's full crew were on board as she had loaded coal in Cardiff (part cargo) and was stopping off in London for Alexandria.

### Police

The morning after I joined, several Customs Officers and two PLA policemen arrived at my door and said that a barrel of rum was missing from the rum wharf and they believed some of our crew were involved in its disappearance. They were going to search the ship and as I was duty officer they wanted me along with them as a witness.

Apparently the lynx nose of the policeman at the dock gate had stopped one of our firemen, who smelled of rum, from heading out. Knowing of the missing barrel he asked the name of his ship then passed him through. As it was OK to smell of liquor inbound, but not outbound, he reported the matter to the Customs.

After searching my cabin the Customs Officers said they wanted to search the chief mate's so I took them along to his cabin and was with them during the search. The chief mate was very upset about the search and while it was in progress he told the Customs officers that the row of beer bottles on a ledge along the inside of his bunk only contained beer. A few minutes later he again mentioned the fact. When he did it a third time they smelled a rat and opened them all. Six were full of overproof rum.

Phew — was his face red and when he insisted that it was rum he had bought ashore — they didn't buy that and he was taken ashore under arrest. Later fined £20 or a month in gaol — he paid up. He was fortunate that the master didn't give him the gate.

From the chief mate's cabin, I took the Customs Officers forward to the crews' forecastles. The sailors' was OK but in the firemen's forecastle there was only one man in there. He was asleep in his bunk or I should say in a drunken stupor with a beer bottle lovingly cradled in his arm. The Customs Officer

grabbed the bottle and found it was half full of overproof rum.

When asked where he got the rum, the man replied in a strong cockney accent "Rum! Rum!! never tasted it in me loife".

"But isn't that rum in the bottle?" asked a Customs Officer.

"Wot bottle?" he replied. "That's not my bottle, sir. Someone has played a joke on me and put it in me arms when I was asleep".

"Then why does your breath simply reek of rum?" asked the Customs Officer.

"No sir, that's not rum sir, it's the cough medicine I'm taking for me bad cough."

By then the Customs had had enough and the man was taken ashore under arrest.

In court he admitted to the magistrate that he was in on the plan to steal the rum and he also told the court where the missing barrel was to be found. He was sentenced to three months hard labour and told that he would get the proper cough medicine in gaol.

And how did he get the rum? It was the custom when loading at the buoys not to use the ship's gangway as it could possibly be damaged by lighters when moving to the various hatches. Instead, a long hold ladder replaced it — lashed against the ship's side with about three rungs jutting above the ship's rail. To keep the bottom of the ladder clear of the ship's side, an empty barrel was filled three quarters full of water then floated in between the ladder and the ship's side. A small boat was hired to ferry people back and forth, this task being done by the night watchman after working hours.

### Water

Apparently the sight of all that rum in the open made some of the firemen's mouth water so much they just had to have some.

When the nightwatchman was asleep in the galley, they took the small boat and rowed across to the wharf with a coil of rope, an auger, a wooden plug, and empty bucket and some empty beer bottles.

The deck of the planked wharf had spaces between each plank so they rolled a barrel into position over a space, then bored a hole in it from underneath. They then ran off half a bucketful — plugged the hole, then filled the beer bottles from the bucket. After lowering the barrel into the water they towed it over to the ship and substituted it for the barrel of water — both barrels being of the same type. They then towed the barrel of water over to the wharf and hid it underneath.

A very clever piece of work and what a store of rum they would have had. But they just weren't clever enough.

Captain Francis Poole



The Worcester Park club house.

## Interest in sport — here's who to contact

There is always a warm welcome awaiting any Group staff who are prepared to play as regularly as possible for the various club teams. Here, for quick reference, are the names and telephone numbers of the section secretaries who will be very pleased to receive any enquiries from potential players.

### WORCESTER PARK

Football: H Winn (3402).  
Cricket: R Carpenter (2433).  
Hockey: J Halliday (2358) or T Shaw (2337).  
Tennis: G W Weston.  
Swimming: G Shaw (3703)  
Squash: G J Martin (2671)

### CHIGWELL

Football: R Wilkins 242-1761 (48).  
Cricket: S E T Francis (5122).  
Badminton: E W Walker (3755).

### PANDOR

Football: R Wilkins 242-1761 (48).  
Tennis: Miss G M Webber (3267).  
Badminton: Miss G M Webber (3267).  
Netball: Miss B J Wilman (3410).  
Table Tennis: B J Broadbride (3159).  
Squash: D Blakeney (2250).  
Rugby: A Henderson-Edward (3778).

## GALA DAY

This year's group gala day at Worcester Park, Surrey (Maori Club) will be held on Saturday afternoon June 30th.

# The here welcome

P&O has three sports clubs in the L area — at Worcester Chigwell and Beaufort. All three are run by strong management mittee under the chairmanship of Alan Bott, Cargo Division's Manager UK/NZ Trade.

But it is Maurice full time secretary of committee, who has been promoting the clubs.

It is he who has prepared these notes on each of them in the hope that staff will take advantage of the amenities they offer.

## Worcester Park

Following Len Ellis' retirement in Sep 1972, W D F (Bill) Ellis took over the management of the club and its grounds in October 1972.

No verbal description does justice to the attraction of the grounds which cover some 17 acres, and facilities for two tables, two football pitches, semi-loose tennis court.

Bill Ellis, whose Sheila supervises domestic matters, is assisted by Simmons as groundsman. Harry Mordecai, whose include general maintenance of the various buildings and equipment.

On those occasions more than one match is played, it is not unusual to find the club's limited facilities coping with some 60 people or more players, supporters and friends.



Bill Ellis, the Worcester Park club manager.



The hockey pitch at Worcester Park being prepared for a match.

## password is simply home ...

Both the 1st and 2nd XI soccer club teams have their own programme of fixtures and the average number of club games played annually at Worcester Park is 36. Some five divisional and Group games also appear in the fixture list.

The Hockey Section plays some 16 matches at home each season, and there are plans in hand to play a further six matches at the club during the summer.

The cricketing scene continues with much activity: with both a 1st and 2nd XI club side, there are some 41 club games planned for the coming season, to be played on Saturdays and Sundays. A further six inter-company and group games are included in the season's programme.

Docks and the City and it is hoped this may be repeated, with a buffet and dancing available later in the evening.

Cricket also thrives under the secretaryship of Stan Francis: in 1972, 13 were won, five drawn and five lost. Families of team members often attend the matches and some help with the teas which are available after every home match.

The social scene is no less active - dances are held regularly (about 10 in the current season) and demand for tickets is considerable. Steve Allan and Reg Covell provide the bands.

An encouraging example of the trend towards the support of popular events by staff from various parts of the Group was the attendance of 450 at the firework/barbecue party last November.

Readers of *Wavelength* will also have seen the annual children's Christmas party reported in the issue of January 1973.

Club steward is Stan Francis and groundsman is Rupert Chumbley. The club house and bar are open during sporting functions and on Tuesday evenings from 8 until 10.30.

## Beaufort House

Following J.G. Davis's departure from the company to join Kleinwort Benson Limited as shipping adviser, W. Kerr (Assistant Fleet Manager, Passenger Division) has been elected the new chairman of the Pandor Club committee, which will now be looking at new ways of revitalising the sports and social activities.

Meanwhile, the clubroom, supervised with unflinching good nature by A.E. Piper and his staff, Mrs A. Thorne, Mrs K. Daniels, and Mrs A. Watson, continues to provide an increasingly popular rendezvous for lunch hour refreshments, evening drinks, and a large number of other functions taking place throughout the year.

These currently include the informal receptions which the Managing Director is holding for the staff of city offices - some 60 people are gathering for each of these receptions, which are also providing an unusual opportunity for staff to meet their colleagues from other divisions.

In contrast to this, the club members from Bishopsgate Insurance stage several disco evenings annually; the clubroom is also popular as a venue for pre-Christmas parties, group training receptions, darts and table tennis tournaments to mention but a few functions.

It needs little imagination to appreciate the pressure at which the clubroom staff often find themselves operating.



Inside the Beaufort House clubroom.

## Committee members

The ten strong management committee is chaired by Alan Bott, General Cargo Division's Trade Manager UK/NZ Trade.

Other members are: M.W. Willey (secretary), Mrs M. Christensen (PR Executive IRD), J.W. Grant (Group Management Pay and Pensions), R.M.J. Green (Assistant Manager, Property), A.M. Robb (Financial Controller, Bulk Shipping Division), A.H.S. Robinson (Sales Servicing Passenger Division), J.R. Sharpe (Educational Cruising Passenger Division), B. Sherlock (Port Agency General Cargo Division), G. Williams (Personnel Development Executive, Personnel Services Division).

The committee's brief includes the general supervision of sports and social activities within the group and also the maintenance and utilisation of the sports grounds and club buildings.

In addition it will recommend to the Group Management Committee the level of financial support necessary to



The bar at Chigwell

maintain existing amenities at an acceptable standard and to promote the activities of new

clubs to be set up in appropriate geographical areas throughout the UK.

## A special report on the London area sports clubs

Tennis club matches are played in the evenings from May to July and the three well-kept courts are available for friendly games at any other time.

Worcester Park has achieved fame from the Gala Days staged there in the summer; these provide an ideal opportunity for staff from all parts of the Group, their families and friends to meet each other in beautiful surroundings. Last year's Gala was organised by Commander E.H. Davies (Personnel Services Division, Fleet Personnel).

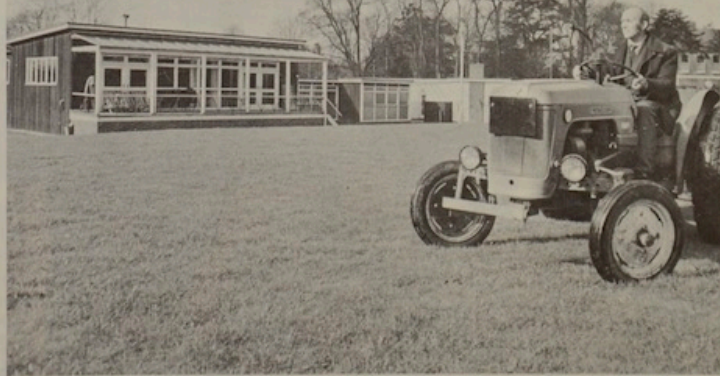
Enquiries about other facilities available in the grounds e.g. putting, swimming, or athletics will be welcomed by Bill Ellis at the club or Maurice Willey (Personnel Services Division/PA Ext 2120).

## Chigwell

Originally acquired by BI in 1959 as an 8 acre field, the grounds have become a popular rendezvous for numerous sporting and social functions - for example, the Pandor Football Club stages league and cup matches on Saturdays from September to April each season.

Ray Wilkins (Bishopsgate Insurance) is the capable secretary of the football Section, whose team opponents play under such intriguing names as Lamberlines and Colocotronis!

Last season a mid-week match was arranged between



The Chigwell club house.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(Continued from page 1)

nevertheless been making losses running at present at about several hundred thousand pounds a year," he said.

"We have, therefore, decided to dispose of the company and negotiations with an interested purchaser have reached an advanced stage. Upon completion there will be a charge against reserves of £2.5 million. I am sure that now is the moment to grasp this nettle. The Group's profits and loss account will benefit correspondingly in future years."

Lord Inchape referred to the need for a new attitude to old problems in the management and labour force at Silley Cox Ltd in Falmouth if the yard was to be successful.

"We have recently considered very carefully whether we should close the yard down or sell it, but I am glad to say we have concluded that, given internal and external confidence, there are good possibilities of making a successful enterprise of a repair yard ideally located, as Falmouth is, to take advantage of the traffic passing through the Channel.

"Success depends on making satisfactory working arrangements which will allow the efficient deployment of resources - both manpower and capital - it will need a new attitude to old problems in the management and in the labour force. Given this, your Board hopes that after the good start which has now been made, the yard at Falmouth will prove to be not only a successful unit within P & O, but a real industrial benefit to the South West Region."

## Mersey dance a great success

The newly formed P & O Sports and Social Club for the Merseyside area was launched in grand style with a dance at Tiffanys, Liverpool on Wednesday 21 February.

Over 350 of the staff and friends from the Liverpool area attended and the event was so successful that a further dance has been arranged for 22 March. It looks very much as though this could be a regular monthly feature.

The Pando Golfing Society, Bowls, Snooker and Football Clubs have arranged their fixtures for the season and there is strong support from group staff.

We hope Pando is now well established in the North West.

## Congratulations

Sue Traies, former SWAP in Chusan and Martin Reed, 1st Officer, Spirit of London on the birth of their first child, a son, Charles Ashleigh.

Malcolm Vincent, Technical Services Division, and his wife, Linda, on the birth of a son, Christopher on 4 January. He weighed 8lbs 3ozs.

# News round-up

## In the wake of Endeavour — a story of men and ships

One of the last works undertaken by Gordon Holman before his sudden death last November was a combined history of The New Zealand and Federal Steam Shipping Companies.

A leading authority on shipping, Mr Holman was shipping and naval correspondent of the London Evening Standard for many years and was well known to several P & O directors, executives and staff.

His last work entitled *In The Wake of Endeavour*, is the story of the men and ships of a great shipping enterprise, and of their exploits in peace and war.

It was in 1873 The New Zealand Shipping Company was founded, in Christchurch, New Zealand, with a fleet of four sailing ships. Gordon Holman traces the history of the Company from those early, difficult days, when it played such an important role in colonial development, through the golden age of sail and the advent of the steamship, right up to the operation of modern, refrigerated cargo carriers. He describes the men of vision who have controlled the growth of the Company across the years, and how, in 1912, they acquired the ships of the Federal Steam Navigation Company by amalgamation. By that time the Company's fleet had expanded to 35 ships, totalling over a quarter of a million tons.

The deeds of the brave sailors and famous ships of that fastgrowing fleet in the testing conditions of the twentieth century — including the hazards of two world wars, as well as the continual battle against the sea — are retold in gripping style.

The climax of the hundred year story is the bright future in prospect for the Company as an integral part of the giant Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. Its ships continue to sail in the wake of Endeavour.

The book is on sale to the public at £4, but members of the P & O Group can obtain a copy at the specially reduced price of £2 from Miss FM Beall, International Relations Division.

## Sir Andrew bids farewell

Sir Andrew Crichton paid his farewell visit to Hong Kong during February in his capacity as Chairman of Overseas Containers Ltd.

During the visit, the P & O Challenge Cup Race was run at Happy Valley and was won by Hi-Power ridden by L. Fox and trained by Jack Goswell. At a presentation ceremony after the race, Lady Crichton presented the trophy to Mr. Lam Yau-Yin, the winning owner.

The P & O Building in Hong Kong which was completed in 1965 is having its first face lift in eight years. Scaffolding has been erected all over the exterior while workmen proceed with a wash and brush up which is expected to last for another month.

Mackinnons Annual Chinese Dinner was held on 26 January at the Tai Tung Restaurant when over 160 employees of the Hong Kong and Godown Companies sat down to the traditional fare after proceedings had opened with a Cabaret.

All visitors to Hong Kong enquire how Mackinnons' Godown is doing. The answer is very well indeed. The five story structure which opened for business a year ago is operating full to capacity with the bonded floor, in particular, in great demand.

Eddie Au, the Manager, who will be remembered by all who called here in Group ships in the last five years, controls a staff of over 40 who often work late into the night loading and unloading containers from the nearby Modern Terminals berth at Kwa Chung, which is now fully operational.

R J G Nicholls



Top: The Bishopsgate Insurance Company's Travel Department. Seated (from left) are Mrs Jean Gilbert and Mrs Marjorie Goodley and standing are Robin Margerson, Deborah Dallimore, Mike Ing, Doug Scott and Ray Wilkins. Bottom: A close up of the plaque.

## Insurers sent plaque by British Olympic Association

One of the more complex risks accepted by the Travel Department of The Bishopsgate Insurance Company during 1972 was the personal insurance of the British team for the Munich Olympic Games.

The department has now received from Mr K S Duncan MBE, general secretary of the British Olympic Association, a plaque in recognition of services rendered.

Complex! Well how does one calculate the premium to insure 500 competitors and officials against accident and medical expenses including

practising and competing in their Olympic events. Other hazards to consider included the uncertainties of high altitude pre Olympic training at St. Moritz and the fact that several airliners each carried an accumulation of almost £700,000 on insured lives.

All went well, however, the quotation was accepted and in spite of nail biting moments such as the Munich terrorist incident and when an official was seen on television to have been struck on the head and felled by a discus the venture was successful — well from a Bishopsgate point of view.

Other than a claim from a competitor who fractured his ribs during a cycle race the most notable loss was of a gold watch by a distinguished yachtsman. Fortunately no claims were made by a well known athlete who lost his hair or by a young lady who broke a world record.

## New pennant for Anchorage Club



The Anchorage Club, the exclusive club formed by serving and retired masters of the former Coast Lines Group, has been presented with a new pennant donated by Mr W Thompson, an honorary member of the club and Coast Lines' former Chief Commercial Manager.

Our photograph shows Mr J R Turner, General Manager P & O Short Sea Shipping Ltd (right) presenting the pennant to Captain C Williams, chairman of the club (left) with Captain R G Morrison, Chief Marine Superintendent, P & O Short Sea Shipping looking on.

## Newport manager retires

Leonard Hibben has taken over from Jack Griffiths as manager of Bethell Gwyn's Newport office.

Jack, who had been at Newport office for 41 years, has retired because of ill-health.

Leonard is a Member of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers and President of the Port Talbot Chamber of Commerce.

He joined Bethell Gwyn at Port Talbot in 1955 as a shipping clerk and was promoted to the position of manager in 1962.

## Westmorland's butter cargo means the end of an era

Australia's last shipment of butter and cheese to Britain before the UK joined the European Common Market, left Melbourne during January in Westmorland.

The shipment included 2,300 tons of butter and 120 tons of cheese and according to the chairman of the

Australian Dairy and Produce Board, Mr AP Beatty, it was the last under the old arrangements.

"Any further shipments of Australian butter and cheese to the UK will come under the EEC arrangements", he said.

"We have been preparing for Britain's entry into the EEC for some 10 years and have had some considerable success in developing other export markets to offset a major part of the loss to British markets", said Mr Beatty. "So while we regret the turn of history, we are firmly facing our new prospects, some of which are quite exciting".

Witnesses to the loading of the last shipment to the UK before Britain's entry into the Common Market were members and staff of P & O Australia Ltd; the Australian Dairy Produce Board; K L Ballantyne Pty Ltd; David Lavery & Don Pty Ltd and officers of the Department of Primary Industry.



## Travel Queen crowned

Captain G C Barrett crowning Miss Penelope de Wet Miss Travel Queen of Southern Africa 1973 on board Chusan on 6 February. Part of Penny's prize was a cruise to South America for her herself and her mother in Chusan. Penny is employed by Avis Rent a Car Company at Johannesburg. In the background is Miss Deirdre Barnard, daughter of Professor Chris Barnard, who assisted Captain Barrett in the ceremony.

## Woolwich plan branch near Beaufort House

A new branch of the Woolwich will be opened towards the end of May or early June at Hammond House on the corner of Minorities and Aldgate.

The site is very close to Beaufort House and Navigation House and is conveniently situated for the staff who work there as well as for sea staff visiting these offices.

The manager of the branch will be Mr Norman Harrison who until recently was manager at the society's Kensington branch.

Alterations to the ground floor offices will start shortly and it is hoped when the office opens P & O employees will call and make themselves known to Mr Harrison and his staff who will be pleased to welcome them.

## Escape route for British prisoners

Continued from page 9

39-45 War. It was reported to be haunted; and as the Sun went down it grew chill, one could well imagine ghosts moving around in the hours of darkness.

According to my old "Poilu" informant it was on this hill that Bayonets were first improvised. In the early 17th Century the men of the Bayonne Regiment, mostly Basques, were holding back the Spaniards. They were hard pressed and ran out of ammunition so they improvised lances by lashing their knives to the muzzles of their muskets. They then charged the Spaniards and threw them down the slope. To this day a lower ridge is known as La Bayonnette.

I had a steak and a bottle of wine before returning to the ship. Talking to the Patronne made for a merry meal, made all the merrier when I found I hadn't enough money to pay the bill. The Patronne however was quite undisturbed though I didn't look very wealthy in old jeans. My word that I'd return next day was good enough. I carried out my promise and had another steak and bottle of wine into the bargain. The inhabitants of Bayonne were very friendly.

Ruby moved upstream and loaded the Sulphur. It was horrible stuff. The dust got into one's eyes, but it dispersed the fleas.

We were destined for the River Dee. Running up the Bay with a following wind it was quite hot and a pair of shorts on the Bridge sufficed in the middle of the day. The Old Man was so struck with this method of keeping cool that he too discarded clothing and moved around in trousers though the braces which held them up rather spoiled the effect of Health and Strength.

We ran into the Dee on a morning dismal with misty rain. The river banks were a mass of mud. There was nothing to do or see ashore. I didn't for the moment possess the wherewithal to pay for my fare home. The outlook could have been depressing but there was always a warm galley in which to sit in a corner and talk to the cook; a most important (and well paid) man.

The outlook soon altered. Ruby received Orders to run along the coast to Llandulas and load stone for Dagenham. This little place consisted merely of a Quarry, a few miners' cottages and a jetty running out into the Irish Sea. Not a nice place in which to be caught in a Northerly gale but the grabs took little time to load our heavy cargo and three days steady steaming, or rather "motoring" interrupted only by a particularly heavy roll off Lands End brought us into the Thames to tie up at Dagenham.

It had been a happy six weeks. My small cabin right aft under the Boat Deck had been comfortable and airy, if at times vibratory. Every day

at sea had been interesting and pleasant especially on the Bridge. Frequent spasms of "Dhobyng" had defied the dirt and dust of our different cargoes. I'd learned not to dry cottons on the iron decks too; quite a lot of ironmould brought this lesson home.

Having overstayed my "Home Leave" by three weeks I judged that it was time to lead a regular life again so having sufficient cash to travel the short distance back I regretfully departed, but not without thoughts of a similar run in the not too distant future.

## B.S.D. cadet wins two top awards

Engineer Cadet P A Leaney of Bulk Shipping Division has become the first student to win both the Phase one cadet of the year award and the OND prize at South Shields Marine and Technical College.

The cadet of the year award is given by P & O and the OND prize by BP.

Cadet D A Jewkes of Passenger Division has been awarded the Second year prize for Engineering ability which is also given by P & O and Cadet J S Powell of Passenger Division has won the Phase 1 METC course prize. This is donated by Texaco.

At Southampton College of Technology, Passenger Division cadet, J K Willis has been awarded the Institute of Marine Engineers prize - a book token for £10 - for the most outstanding second year HND performance.

And at Poplar Technical College Engineer Cadet Stephen J Allinson of General Cargo Division has been awarded book tokens for £5 and the John Weir Medal for the best all round student of the 1971-72 session. In addition he also won book tokens worth £9 for the best second year student taking the OND course.

## Art haul recovered

Suffolk police have recovered all the works of art - valued at £12,000 - which were stolen from the Earl Soham home of P & O director and OCL Managing Director, Sir Andrew Crichton.

The thieves haul had included oriental curios, antique furniture, silverware and paintings.

## Small ads

● Two furnished flats are available for rent at the Maori Club, Worcester Park, Surrey. The club is set in attractive surroundings, and is equidistant from the B283 leading to Malden Road and the A240 Kingston Road leading to Ewell and Epsom. Worcester Park Station is on the main Southern Region Line and Waterloo is reached in approximately 25 minutes.

The top flat comprises one double bedroom (14'6" x 12'6"), one single bedroom (14'6" x 10'6"), lounge (18'0" x 14'6"), kitchen with fitted cupboards (10'0" x 9'0"), bathroom with heated towel rail/hand basin, separate WC, hall with carpet and a fitted airing cupboard.

The first floor flat comprises of two bedrooms (14'0" x 14'6" and 14'0" x 11'9"), lounge (23'0" x 16'0"), kitchen with fitted cupboards, table and window seat (9'6" x 12'0"), bathroom and WC/heated towel rail/handbasin, hall with carpet and fitted airing cupboard.

Both flats have a GPO telephone connected, and provision has been made for TV reception. They are centrally heated and constant hot water is available from a separate boiler. Furniture and furnishings include washing machines, refrigerators, gas cookers, cooking utensils and bed linen.

For further particulars please contact Maurice Willey, secretary, Group Sports and Social Clubs, P & O Building, Floor 9.

● SPAIN. Costa Blanca twixt Calpe/Moraira. Large villa with self contained guest flat beneath; whole comprising 4/5 bedrooms, three bathrooms, 2 kitchens and 3 reception rooms. Garage (double) sun terraces: 1000 sq. mts. 120 mts. above small sandy beach and harbour. Fully furnished with all services. Owner moving Costa Brava. Apply Captain R H Hand, "Dos Manos", Playa Abogat, Benisa, Alicante.

● The Following books are offered for sale by a P & O Pensioner: *BI Centenary (1856-1956)* by George Blake £1; *A Hundred Year History of the P & O (1837-1937)* £2.50. Both are in good condition but covers are slightly soiled. Send cheque/postal order to The Editor, Wavelength, who will pass all correspondence to the advertiser.

## Couple take over pub

Former P & O bar steward, Charles William Morrison and his wife, Gloria, have taken over the Tinnars Arms in Zennor, about four miles west of St. Ives, Cornwall. Charles was previously a steward at Tehidy Park Golf Club in Camborne Cornwall.



## Canberra receptions

Canberra arrived in New York on 30 January to start the Passenger Division's first ever cruise programme on the US East Coast - 19 cruises of from 7 to 15 days duration. During a hectic 36 hour turn-round in New York, three major receptions were held on board for civic dignitaries, Press and travel trade representatives. At the first of these, Captain Eric Snowden presented Mr Edgar C Faber, Commissioner, Ports and Terminals and Mr Lyle King, Director, Marine Terminals with commemorative gifts - replicas of Armada plate. Pictured here, left to right, are: Richard B Patton, President Cunard Line Limited (General Sales agents for Canberra in the US); Edgar C Faber, Commissioner Ports and Terminals City of New York; Captain Eric Snowden, Master ss Canberra; Lyle King, Director, Marine Terminals Port Authority of New York and New Jersey; Peter E Parry, Head of Passenger Division.

# Fred Olsen Lines knock Pandor for six in Port Cup



Pandor were decisively beaten in the second round of the Port Cup, going down 6-1 against Fred. Olsen Lines.

The game was played at the National Dock Labour Board ground at Walthamstow on 22 January, writes Ray Wilkins, and before this date the Pandor side, drawn from all parts of the P & O Group, had never played together as a team. This was to become the main reason for their downfall.

Pandor started brightly and began to move the ball around with greater fluency than their opponents and had much the better of the scoring chances, several of which should have resulted in at least one goal.

Olsen's could manage only one scoring chance which was put high over the bar when it would have been easier to score.

Pandor's defence played tightly throughout the first half and kept Olsen's forwards outside the penalty area. At half time there was no score.

The second half was a different story. Olsen's midfield began to click and gradually took command. Their wingers began to find ways past the Pandor defence and it became only a matter of time before they scored. However, it was Pandor who



Goalmouth action as Pandor in the light strip assault the Olsen goal.

almost took the lead when Simon Owens' had his goal-bound header kicked off the line.

Seven goals then followed in the space of 30 minutes, the sixth going to Pandor when Ian Long scored from close range after a corner. By this time the Pandor defence had become more and more ragged and the fact that they had never played together

before was very obvious.

On the day Olsen's were the better side and deserved to win but it was unfortunate that they were met by a Pandor side unfamiliar with each other.

However there's always next year!!!

Pandor team: R Wilkins (Bishopsgate Insurance) (captain), R Fernandez

(Group Accounts), M Gurden (General Cargo Division), T Guymer (E&ATD Accounts), I Long, T Newham (Bishopsgate Insurance), J Williams (Personnel Services), I Gregson (Computer Bureau), S Owens (General Cargo Division), B Barnes (Group Accounts), D Venham (Freight Forwarders), Sub. C Tolman (Bulk Shipping Accounts).

## Obituary

We record with deep regret the following deaths:

### P & O

H F Parlett on 12 January, J M Brown on 28 November, W A Rowe on 2 January, W D Joseph on 4 February, A G Earney on 16 February, S F Warren on 21 February, D F Martin.

### BRITISH INDIA

C E Gibbon on 19 December.

### GENERAL STEAM

Captain R C Watson on 21 January, J W S Charman on 14 January.

### THE NEW ZEALAND SHIPPING CO

Miss L G Anderton on 25 January, R Smith on 25 February, J W Fulton on 14 February.

### COAST LINES

G H Clarke on 9 January, D J MacDonald on 25 January, S C J M Neve on 24 January, G R Hooton on 1 February, J C MacKinnon on 23 February.

### STRICK LINE

A Peacock

### ASIATIC

Captain M J B McClure on 19 December.

### MOSS HUTCHISON

Mrs W E McCall on 24 February

## Treasurer

Jeff Carter, Technical Service Division's Technical Librarian, has been reappointed treasurer of the Marine Librarians Association.

Mrs Edith (Bretty) Makepiece, who went along to the Orient Line in 1948 to help man the switchboard "just for two weeks" being presented with a cut glass vase from her colleagues when she retired in January. During her service with the Orient Line, Bretty worked at 14-16 Cockspur Street, 26 Coxspur Street and 7-11 Bishopsgate. Following the merger with P & O she became supervisor at 14-16 Cockspur Street then later moved to Beaufort House. She moved to Leadenhall Street five years ago and on her retirement was the enquiries clerk. Bretty was also presented with two bouquets by her telephone room colleagues - one to mark her third wedding anniversary which fell on her retirement day.



# Monty Python star has staff in fits

"Don't you try arguing with me, I tell you it's a dead parrot". TV actor and comedian extraordinaire John Cleese, join his flying circus. Among the willing Python's Flying Circus, extras who helped along the film was George Lifford, Group Manager, Administration (left). Long, tall John also tried to learn his lines in the Telephone Exchange, but decided the spoken variety were far easier! He is seen with three of our telephonists: Pat Lake, Maggie Wood and Rita Jones, in the picture below.



Commander H C Granger-Brown concludes his series of articles about his early days at sea with a story of an ill-fated voyage in the Rangoon built wooden barquentine Hyastan

In 1919 I was appointed master of the Hyastan, a wooden barquentine of 1160 gross, 1062 nett, which had just been built at Pazundaung Creek, Rangoon, for Mr A C Martin, an Armenian. He had wanted to call his ship the Armenia but as there was already a vessel of that name in the Register he called her Hyastan, which is the Armenian name for Armenia. She was a very handsome-looking vessel, loftily rigged and with painted ports. Another sailing vessel was built at the same time almost alongside the Hyastan, this being the auxiliary barque Kundgram, of 884 gross, owned by an Indian firm in Rangoon. It might be mentioned that it was intended to give the Hyastan a motor but this was never fitted.

In Rangoon the vessel loaded a cargo of teakwood for Calcutta and we left there on the morning of the 14 October 1919. I might say that this was just about the worst month in the whole year for a sailing vessel to make the voyage from Rangoon to Calcutta, for October in the Bay of Bengal is a period of calms and variable winds, and also the most dangerous time for cyclones. But the Hyastan was a commercial venture and when she was ready for sea, to sea she had to go. When we left the crew consisted of a Mr Gomez, who had an Indian Master's certificate, as mate; a Mr McGrath as second mate un-certificated; six apprentices, cook, steward, and 24 Telugu lascars from the Coromandel Coast, all of them experienced sailors. This was, of course, a very large crew for a vessel of the Hyastan's size.

## Grounded

From the beginning the voyage seemed ill-fated. While going down the river in tow and with a pilot in charge, the ship grounded in the Spit Channel at the mouth of the river. Up till then the tug had been towing alongside but when we grounded it was decided she should tow from ahead, and in manoeuvring to do so her semaphore signalling arms in the wing of the bridge fouled our fore brace, resulting in the semaphore gear and a considerable amount of the tug's bridge structure being pulled overboard. After casting off the tug and discharging the pilot, all sail was set and on an ebb tide with a fine north-easterly breeze the ship made good headway. But it was not long before we had another narrow escape from trouble and it was more by good luck than anything else that we missed it. It happened at the first streak of daylight when we were near Krishna Light-vessel, in the Gulf of Martaban, drifting south-westward on the ebb tide in an almost flat calm. An Indian brig called the Aloa of Bombay was anchored there without lights and we just managed to clear her by a matter of feet as we drifted by, a very faint north-easterly air saving us

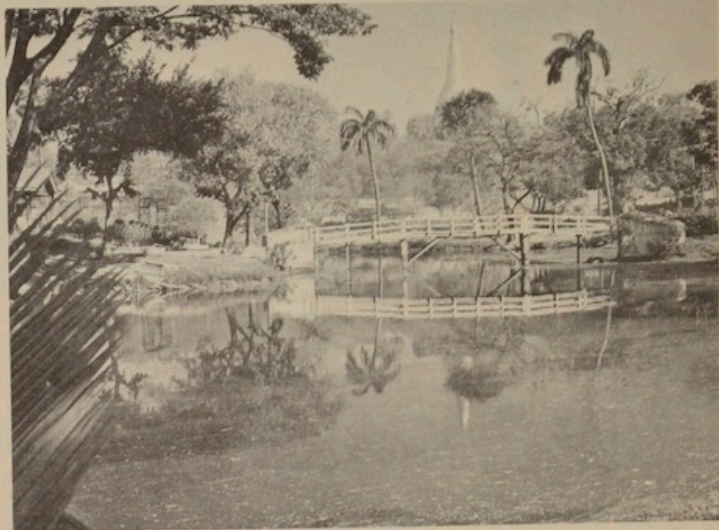
# 'Our only chance of survival was to abandon ship'

from actually touching her.

Off Alguada I found I was in for a bout of dysentery, and as the days passed my complaint grew more serious in spite of all I could do. It began to look as though it would be necessary to get medical advice and medicine from a passing steamer, and for this reason I kept well in the steamer track. In the ordinary way I should have kept well to windward of this track, on the starboard tack, to make the Sandheads at about the Mutlah Light-vessel. A few steamers passed close-to but I resisted the temptation to bother them. A good passage was made to the Swatch of No Ground, about 35 miles from the Eastern Channel Light-vessel, and here the north-easterly breeze that had carried us so far died away to a flat calm which lasted for several days. In this calm Hyastan drifted on a south-westerly current at a rate of about 40 miles a day and there was nothing we could do about it. Altogether we drifted about 120 miles to leeward of our required landfall. The weather was depressingly hot and sticky and when in about the latitude of Puri my old dog "Bos'n" died, of pneumonia and heat stroke, I think.

On the third day there were definite signs of unsettled weather, and, as the day wore on, it became apparent that a cyclone was approaching. The wind, still in the north-east, rapidly increased to gale force and I decided that as we were in a particularly vulnerable and dangerous position, on a dead lee shore, I would get under way and obtain as much sea room as possible. After weighing anchor, sail was set to upper topsail, mainsail and mizzen and I stood out to sea on the port tack. I knew only too well that I was running into worse weather but considered that preferable to the unwelcome coast to leeward. As the day advanced sail had to be reduced and the ship hove-to under very short canvas. This canvas was kept on in order to steady the

ship, which by now was experiencing a hurricane force wind and very confused sea, and was in danger of having the masts rolled out of her. Towards nightfall the wind increased even more and the canvas which was set was blown away. Before any more could be set, the fore topmast with topgallant and royal masts and yards came down by the run, bringing with them the main topmast and mizzen topmast. Before we could get rid of all this topmammer, lying alongside secured to the ship by its rigging, it had battered the wooden hull so badly that some of the planks were stove in and the ship showed signs of foundering. During all this time it was only with the greatest difficulty that one could stand on deck at all. The next morning the weather eased a bit and it was



The world famous Shwedagon Pagoda in Rangoon. It was from the Burmese capital in 1919 that Commander Granger-Brown sailed for Calcutta in the Hyastan.

only then that we became aware of the really serious position we were in, when it was found that our fresh water tanks had collapsed and there was no drinking water on board. In the storm all our live stock was washed overboard and now the ship, full of water, was floating on her timber cargo, with her main deck completely submerged and the fo'c'slehead, midship round house and poop deck only out of the water.

In an attempt to get the ship under command fore and aft sails were set on all three masts but in her water-logged condition these had no effect and with a southerly current she drifted for several days. Luckily a rain squall came along and we were able to collect four buckets of drinking water. All our foodstuffs in the lazarette were deep in the water but

the apprentices managed to recover two tins of bully beef, weighing seven pounds each, and these I hung on to as long as possible. After six days on the derelict, during which time we drifted about 200 miles and sighted only one steamer, we were out of the shipping lanes. The one good thing about this affair was that our lifeboats, on their skids, had survived and were in pretty good order. On this day it became evident that the ship was losing her stability and seemed to be in danger of capsizing, sometimes rolling heavily onto her beam ends. It was also clear that for want of food and water all members of the crew were rapidly becoming weak and exhausted. No more rain fell and we could get no more food from the lazarette. In view of these facts I came to the conclusion that our only chance of survival was to abandon ship and make for the shore in the lifeboats, and this was done. Once in the boats the two tins of bully beef were broached and their contents shared out among the 36 members. Immediately after this had been done one of the older hands enquired what sort of meat it was. It dawned on me then that being Hindu my fo'c'sle hands would not eat beef, and I visualised that in their disappointment and their starving condition we were likely to encounter an even more serious state of affairs in the boats, so I told them it was mutton. I believe the eating of it did them all a modicum of good, and no less so because they had accepted it knowing full well I had lied about it.

After two days sailing and rowing we made the coast at Baruva, on the east coast of India, a small fishing village. On our near approach to the shore it could be seen that a heavy surf was running on the beach and I knew that our boats could not live in such broken water. Accordingly we hung off - outside the breakers - and I bargained with the natives for the hire of their surf boats to land us, for I knew full well that in

our weak state we were unlikely to survive if any attempt were made to run the surf in our own boats. In the surf boats we landed safely and for a time camped out on the beach. Once we got ashore the local folks were exceedingly kind and helpful and gave us what they could in the way of food. It did not amount to much - only rice and pepper water - but on this we ate our fill and were glad to get it. On this voyage I left Rangoon weighing over 13 stone and in Baruva I was down to 9½ stone. On the other hand, our misadventures had somehow disposed of my dysentery, which has never recurred, in spite of the initial intake of rice and pepper water.

After a couple of days at Baruva we went to Calcutta by rail and I paid off my crew. I attended the Port Office periodically knowing that sooner or later news would come through about my derelict ship. Several days later I learned that Hyastan had been sighted off Divi Point, some 200 miles south of where we had abandoned her, and had been taken in tow by the steamer Clan Ranald, on passage from Madras to Calcutta. With Hyastan in tow the Clan Ranald had put back to Madras and had cast her off near the port, from where the wreck eventually drifted ashore a mile or two to the south of the Madras breakwater. I travelled to Madras by rail and there swam off to my ship, finding no-one on board her. Through Lloyd's Agent in Madras I reclaimed the ship but in the heavy surf she rapidly broke up. With working gangs I was, however, able to recover quite a considerable amount of her valuable teak cargo. Afterwards, I went again to Calcutta where a Court of Inquiry was held concerning the loss of the ship. I came out of this quite well and was found to be nowise at fault for the ship's loss; indeed, I felt gratified at being congratulated by the Court at not losing any member of the crew.



The sun sets over the Rangoon River.



Captain Lionel T. Carter.

## Captain looks back on his career at sea

Fourteen years have passed since Captain Lionel T. Carter retired from the sea. Now at the age of 69, he is beginning to see the end of a book he is writing at his home near Norwich on "My Life At Sea".

Captain Carter spent 40 years with BI. He began writing his book two years ago and when in six months' time the manuscript is complete he will send the 400 pages to P & O in London for approval, and, he hopes, the addition of pictures of some of his ships.

In all he served in 47 ships. Throughout the war he was in troop carriers. Then in 1945 came his first command. His last was the cadet ship, Chantala, a name he gave to his bungalow when he retired.

After a busy spell of public work, his sight began to fail in 1970, and he and his wife, who suddenly lost her sight, left the bungalow to live at The Depperhaugh country house at Hoxne. There he does his writing and Mrs Carter, despite her affliction, is able to type and make rugs.

Their wedding in Calcutta followed a shipboard

romance. Their son, David, after 10 years in the Merchant Navy, is an accountant at Watford, and their daughter is deputy head of a comprehensive school at Droitwich.

## A cadet's view of life in the Merchant Navy

One evening, about six months ago, after an arduous day sweeping rotting grain from the hold and emptying rusty water, slimy pitch, etc., from the bilges, I spent an hour cleaning myself and then went into the Cadet's study, where I thought I might relax for an hour or so with a good book. I picked up a pamphlet which read "Join the Merchant Navy and see the world; sail to exotic places; watch the flying fish and dolphins play round the ship. Enter the calm waters of the lagoon where beautiful dancing girls are waiting to welcome you ashore..." and I thought "That's a good life. I ought to join." It was some time before I realised that this was what the people back home thought I was doing!

Although I'm still hoping to meet the beautiful dancing girls, I have really been very lucky as I have so far been to some very fascinating places: the Persian Gulf, where I bargained in the cavern-like shops for souvenirs; Karachi, where crowds of beggars followed as I rode a camel along the street; Chalna, where our ship was shelled; Sydney, where I swam from

# My first encounter with BI—a trooping voyage to Karachi

My recent article of reminiscences of the old BI and the subsequent correspondence and conversations brought back a flood of long dormant memories, not only of the ships in which I served, but of the general conditions prevailing for those whose business took them across the great oceans.

One memory is very clear-cut: in those days ships looked like ships, the liners elegant and dashing, the cargo boats bluff and bowed and pot bellied but still looking like ships and not like glorified mud barges.

Here in Guernsey on the Channel sealand we often see the contrast glaringly illustrated. Recently off St Peter Port there was anchored the BI schoolship Nevasa looking every inch a liner and a little later the extremely beautiful German liner Europa came in with American tourists. A few miles across the island to the western cliffs opened up a parade of gigantic barges — tankers, bulk carriers, container ships — all with their superstructures nearly falling off the stern! I wonder if the officers on these ships can even faintly visualise the beauty of the Viceroy of India or the Strathnaver or

the majesty of the Mauretania, Olympic, Kaiser Wilhelm II, Deutschland, Empress of Britain, Paris and a host of others at speed on the open sea? No wonder we oldsters are a nostalgic breed.

My first encounter with the BI was my appointment to the Rohilla, commodore troopship specially built for the job by Harland and Wolff and waiting to make her first trooping voyage — to Karachi, via Gibraltar, Malta, Port Said and Aden. As trooping by ship has long since died a natural death it may be interesting to give a few details of life aboard a trooper.

On Rohilla most of the lower promenade deck was given over to the men except for a portion of the port side forward where the entrances to the first class public rooms were situated and these were separated from the men by wire screens supported on stout posts. The upper promenade deck or boat deck was divided into three portions. My wireless cabin was on an island amidships and immediately abaft was a transverse barrier. From this forward was all first class while the portion behind was divided into port and starboard sections, the former reserved for non-commissioned officers and the latter for married other ranks. Heavy double awnings covered the whole when necessary.

The lifeboat equipment was very elaborate as besides having numerous standard lifeboats there were collapsible Berthon boats ranged alongside. One lifeboat on each side was kept permanently outboard in case of accidents and so efficient was the training of the lascar emergency crew that it was only a matter of minutes before the boat was away when it was a case of "man overboard". We were steam-

ing at 16 knots off the Burlings one day when a man went over the side and he was back aboard in seven minutes.

Southampton was the traditional trooping port and during the off-season the seven troopships lay to anchor in a line down the water. The autumn saw the commencement of the trooping season and we went alongside the Itchen quays for the embarkation. The army embarkation officer had already been over the accommodation with the ship's troopdeck officer so when the men started to arrive about breakfast time on the Friday morning all was ready. We sailed on Friday evening so as to arrive at Gibraltar at daylight Monday morning.

At Gib, we lay alongside the Gunwharf and at Malta in the Grand Harbour — both much the same as they are today. At Port Said it was a different story and those people who visited it just prior to the closure of the Canal would not have recognised the port of 1911.

The coast is very low lying and on approaching it the first thing seen over the horizon was the skysign towering over the emporium of Simon Artz advertising "Longines and Tavanex". Then through the channel where the statue of Ferdinand de Lesseps welcomed incoming ships from the breakwater and so to anchorage off the town. Like all ships of those days Rohilla was coal-burner and Port Said the great coaling port. Before arrival canvas screens had been rigged fore and aft to keep out as much coal dust as possible. All around was coal, the islands on the port side were piled high while lighters either full or returning empty were everywhere. Every ship in port had its quota of attendant lighters manned by the most villainous looking coolies imaginable while up

the harbour in the Africa Basin the colliers lay pouring their cargoes into yet more lighters. A haze of coal dust hung over everything. We were hardly at anchor before the side ports were opened and lighters pulled alongside. The men rigged a series of stages up to each port and with two men per stage were soon passing up baskets of fuel. The performance was rhythmic and bunkering quick.

Passengers could either go ashore by boat or stay on the ship. On shore there was little to do except buy things at Simon Artz or visit the numerous pornographic salons. On board in spite of the dust there was plenty to hold the interest. The Gulli Gulli man with his chickens always turned up while wandering merchants tempted one with leather pouffes, embossed handbags, tapestry panels of incredible crudeness etc, while occasionally a smarmy specimen would sidle up and pulling an obvious fake out of a filthy rag would whisper "Genuine statue from very old tomb". While these gentlemen were around it was advisable to keep all portholes and doors tight locked! The dispensers of curios who were not allowed aboard lay alongside in the bumboats and did business via a basket on a rope.

It was on Rohilla's deck that I witnessed the most amazing conjuring trick. The performer arrived with a beautiful young girl assistant and was soon the centre of about a hundred passengers who formed a complete circle around him. After doing the usual rope trick and mango trick he produced a circular closely woven wicker basket like a large lobster pot and into this he introduced the

Continued on page 17

More news from GCD appears on pages 12 and 13



Aden — as it was some years ago.

Cadet Stephen Millard

Eric Sharp recalls his first voyage

girl curling her round the periphery in a tight fit. He then produced a sword and passed it completely through the basket a number of times from side to side. Now whether it was mass hypnotism or what I don't know but I do know that the girl came tripping along the deck outside the circle of passengers and that the basket was empty!

Coaling finished we were soon away into the Canal with the Privilege flag at the fore - the mail and troopers went through without tying up for other ships. The Canal in those days really merited the sailor's name of "The Ditch" for it was just that, a winding channel cut through the desert sands. This was its great charm and being an out and out romantic I never went below during a transit.

One of the most interesting things about the Canal is that it is about the only place on earth where you can actually see the curvature of the earth. At sea a ship sinks below the horizon but in the straight length after leaving Port Said you watch a ship in the far distance gradually tilt over the curve and if she is coming towards you there is the still more uncanny sight of her climbing up the curve and flattening into the channel! How do the flat earth people explain that I wonder!

Of course a night transit was the most romantic as none of the curves had been straightened out and you saw the glare of the searchlights of oncoming ships over the bends. A long train of camels would pass along in the moonlight while the stone laden dahabeahs slid past. The silence was profound and the mind could wander over the desert and picture the scenes of Egypt's greatness. Years later when I lived in Egypt and was able to wander through the tombs and museums I knew why I had been enthralled in my early days and realised the rightness of the poem I wrote during one transit:

"Just a narrow channel through the desert sands Winding on from lake to lake, joining up the lands, Linking sea to ocean, so men at your birth Propheesed that here would pass half the trade on earth.

We admire the skilful work that shaped your early form, Hail de Lesseps' spirit in its home beyond the dawn; But not this your greatest charm for your desert red Conjures up the vision of an age long gone and dead, In our minds we still can see marching men at arms

As Pharoah strides to conquer 'mid the sounds of war's alarms, See him cross in awful state, spreading Egypt's fame



Rohilla

From the Delta to the Tigris with the help of sword and flame!

See his workmen gathered, working in the mines Delving for the precious stones to decorate his shrines!

We can hear the priests intone 'neath the pylons shade-Watch their mighty temples reared, the grandest ever made.

Hear the crack of cruel whips on the slaves that toil To raise the monstrous Pyramids, nor age nor time can spoil.

See the mystic galleries, cut in living rock, Where the sacred bulls retire, aloof from common stock.

Others, where the Kings who died for ever lie at rest Till Osiris claims them for the dwellings of the blessed.

See colossal images to glorify the Kings-Hear the Vocal Memnon wail when the daylight wings.

See great Queen Hatasu launch fleets of mighty ships Rowing down the Red Sea coasts 'neath the driver's whips

To the sacred land of Punt, coming back with hold Stored with spices, apes and myhrr, jewels and precious gold.

Hear the Gods of Egypt weeping for the Past, Nut and Set and Isis, Thoth and Ra and Bast!

Watch the Lord Almighty plaguing all the land While His servant, Moses, leads the chosen band

From slavery unto freedom; much to Pharoah's wrath-See the Red Sea whelm him, him and all he hath.

Just a narrow channel, highway from the West Making mock of centuries at the mind's behest!

As we scan the desert, whether first or last Dreams will come to haunt us, dreams from out the Past".

The run down the Red Sea was neither better nor worse than expected. The men slept on deck in the comparative cool while during the day parties of wives prepared communal meals under the awnings. In the first class the usual deck games lured the energetic while whist was the chief indoor sport. However, when Aden was left behind the balmy winter weather of the Indian Ocean brought everyone on deck and after dinner at night concerts on deck with dancing enlivened the scene. There are few lovelier sights than a beautiful woman in evening dress singing on the deck of a liner

under the tropic moon!

As we entered Karachi harbour an outward bound tramp passed us deep laden with grain and when I say that we lay in Karachi a week and arrived in Suez on the same day as she did it shows what the speed of a cargo boat was in those days. The troops were soon ashore and away for a day or two we could relax. We had two major enjoyments - riding the big turtles on Kimari sands and running gharry races along the causeway leading to the city! One day a prominent desert sheik made it known that he would like to inspect the new troopship and in due course he and his retinue arrived and were duly impressed. As a mark of his esteem he presented us with several jars of the special imperial dates. These jars are of coarse earthenware without stoppers and when stuffed with the fruit are buried in the hot sand and left to ferment with the sand forming a stopper. When ready the pots are smashed and the contents forms the most fearsomely rich sweetmeat it is possible to imagine. Accustomed as we were to the wonderful food provided on Rohilla this mess got us down!

Homeward bound we were lucky as we shipped a regiment and this meant that the regimental band was on board. Every evening at dinner this was stationed at the head of the stairs leading to the saloon so the leisurely meal was enjoyed to the strains of martial music. Like all liners of the time the saloon was furnished with long tables as well as a number of smaller ones. The three long ones were presided over by the captain, chief officer and chief engineer with the surgeon and purser taking lower positions. We junior officers had a table to ourselves. It was a very beautiful sight at dinner with all the men in mess kit and all the women in the lovely long evening dresses of the period.

Mealtime was about the only time anyone saw anything of Capt Smith - his life was his ship and he was never very far from his bridge. He had one awful habit - he was a chain smoker of Burmah cheroots which he smoked to about three quarters of the length. The butt was then carefully stored in a jar in his cabin. There were always several jars packed tight and the butts were used in accordance with the wind force on the Beaufort scale.

Thus when it was blowing a real buster he went back to butts that had been stewing in their own juice for weeks. The effect on those near him can be imagined! He bought cheroots by the thousand and it may cheer smokers to know that he suffered no ill effects. After he retired to his home in Gravesend my wife and I used to visit him and we found that he had celebrated his 70th birthday by cycling to Brighton and back.

In those days all dwellers in the tropics wore pith helmets against the sun (not to mention spine pads) and on return to England a ritual was observed after we had picked up the pilot at the Needles - liners used the Solent in those days and left Spithead to the Navy. Once well into the channel the men went below and returned with their topees and overboard they went. As a result there was a long thin line of helmets all the way up to the docks! The pilots had some mysterious power of divining when the Customs men were planning a raid for smuggled tobacco and occasionally long lines of cheroots joined the helmets! The ship's crew put theirs under bond.

Captain Smith was very good to me as he knew I lived in the Channel Islands and always arranged for me to sign off in time to catch the night boat home and he kept the articles open until I reported back a day or two before sailing. So taken all in all my introduction to the good old BI was extremely propitious.

Cumberland picks up 42 survivors from tanker

A wife and a dog were among 42 survivors plucked to safety from the Cyprus registered tanker, Nelson last month by the P & O cargo ship, Cumberland.

The 20,740 ton tanker had sailed from Augusta, Sicily on 6 February for Philadelphia, USA with a cargo of low grade sulphur fuel. She radioed for assistance after fractures appeared in her cargo and hull tanks in heavy weather.

Cumberland, under the command of Captain D C Blackman of Hawick, Scotland and homeward bound from New Zealand with a full cargo of meat and butter, answered the call.

She was expected to land the survivors in the Azores before proceeding to Liverpool.

Manapouri gives Japanese doll to visitors from Gillingham school

A wet and windy day didn't prevent pupils from the Danecourt School (ESN) in Gillingham enjoying themselves when they visited the Manapouri in Sheerness.

From the bridge they watched the unloading of meat from New Zealand and then went on a tour of the radio room and ship's accommodation before sitting down to a superb tea.

The youngsters were welcomed on board the ship - which the school adopted several years ago - by Captain F C Taylor. Also present was Captain J D Guyler, who commanded Manapouri when the link with the ship was formed and who was to relieve Captain Taylor a few days later.

Shortly before their day out ended, Captain Guyler presented the pupils with a large doll in Japanese national costume which had been given to Manapouri when she was commissioned in Japan.

The school later sent Manapouri a mahogany bowl which had been made by the pupils in their work training centre.

£9 prize goes to former cadet

Book tokens worth £9 have been awarded to former Engineer Cadet D I Brown - now an AEO with General Cargo Division - for his work while on a phase III machine shop practice course at Poplar Technical College.

This prize will be presented at the college's prize distribution on 15 March.

Lawrence Hendry retires

Commodore Chief Engineer Lawrence Hendry has retired after almost 40 years at sea.

Mr Hendry who hails from Dundee, joined The New Zealand Shipping Company in 1934 as a 6th Engineer Officer in the ss Tasmania. He was promoted to 5th Engineer in 1937, 4th Engineer in 1938, 3rd Engineer in 1939, 2nd Engineer in 1944, Chief Engineer in 1952 and the company's Commodore Engineer in 1971. He took up his present appointment on 1 June last year.

Mr Hendry has served in about 25 different ships with 30 different masters including well known and formidable characters like Captains Lettington, A I Robertson, George Dunning, Calcutt,

HRM Smith and Fulcher. His ships have included the old Remuera, the old Ruahine and the new Rangitoto on which he served for her first three voyages.



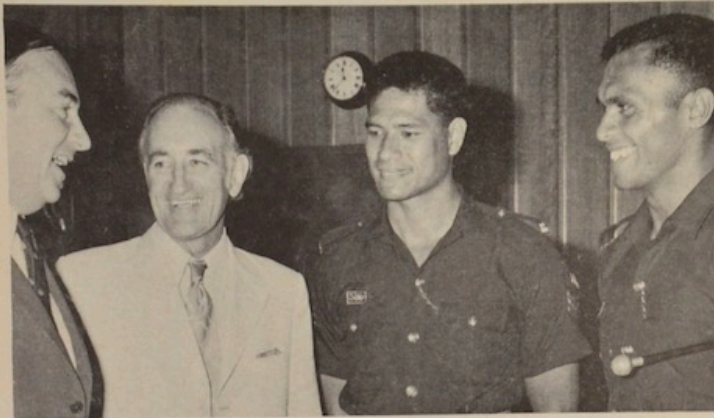
Commodore Chief Engineer Officer Lawrence Hendry.

Mr Hendry had an eventful war: he was aboard the Westmorland when she was torpedoed, shelled and sunk by a U-boat in the North Atlantic in June 1942 and also the Empire Whimbrell when she was torpedoed and sunk by a U-boat off Freetown in April 1943.

Luncheon

A farewell luncheon was held for Mr Hendry at Colonial House, Mincing Lane and there to wish him a long and happy retirement were Mr H T Beazley (Chief Executive), Captain K Barnett (Commodore Master), Mr J V Downing, Mr P Dobbie, Mr J W Grant, Mr A G Hatchett and Mr R F A Hosking.

# Cruise promotions brings Sydney to a halt



Sydney's traffic was brought to a grinding halt when Australia's annual cruise fortnight promotion got off to a start. But it was all official and not one driver complained.

Behind the halt were two Fiji policemen - Sergeant Qalo Bulatiko and Sergeant Panapasa Matai - who were invited over to Australia as guests of P & O and during their stay took over point duty at one of Sydney's busiest junctions (right).

At the start of their stay the two policemen, watched by the Regional Director of the Fiji Visitors Bureau, Sydney presented Managing Director, Mr R T M Rose with a book on the Fiji Islands (left).



## Canberra Award scheme to end

The Canberra Award scheme for Australian young farmers is to end.

The six young farmers who sail for Britain in Oriana later this month, will be the last group to tour the United Kingdom under the scheme.

Mr R T M Rose, Managing Director of P & O Australia said that it was with regret that P & O had decided to terminate the scheme.

"The decision was taken,

however, because of the changing pattern of our passenger services, with the reduction in line voyages and emphasis on cruising, which no longer provides the regularity of sailings to the UK needed for the scheme to continue".

The Canberra Award scheme was inaugurated by P & O in 1958 to commemorate the building of the 45,000 ton Canberra.

Each year since 1959, six members of the Australian Rural Youth movement have spent six months in Britain as guests of P & O who provide their passage to and from the UK, arrange the tour programme and meet all hotel and tour expenses.

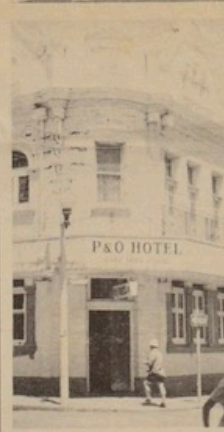
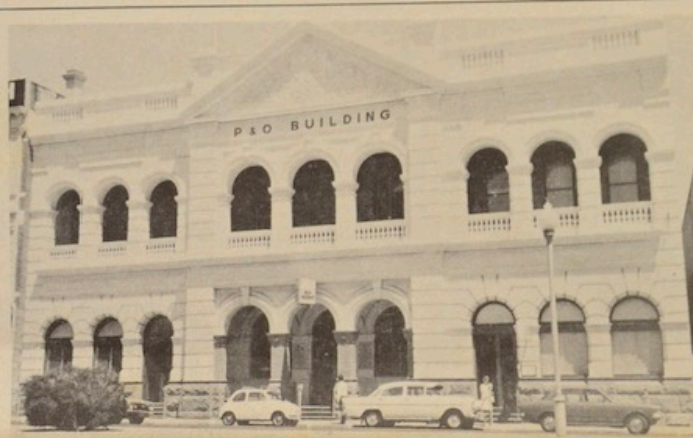
At the end of each tour the young farmers compete for a separate Canberra Scholarship.

The Scholarship, worth A\$2,500 (£1,358) enables the winner to take a course in agriculture at an Australian University, Agricultural or Technical College or, as an alternative, provides a cash grant to spend on an approved agricultural project.

## Pam Haigh heads for Australia



Pam Haigh (above) flew into Sydney earlier this month to attend the 3rd annual convention of the International Federation of Women's Travel Club. Women from most parts of the world including another 39 from Great Britain attended the three day convention after which Pam packed her bags and set off on a two week sight seeing holiday of the Great Barrier Reef and Canberra. She is flying home via Fiji, where she will spend two days, and San Francisco where she will break her journey for another two days. Pam, who has worked with P & O for 21 years, is a member of the Women's Travel Club of Great Britain. Her air tickets to and from Sydney were a gift from Qantas.



## Fremantle office of historical interest

The Fremantle office (above) which celebrates its 70th anniversary this year, has been named by the recently formed Fremantle Society as a building which should be preserved because of its historical interest.

The society - 500 members - attended its first meeting - says that the office is an essential part of the old sea port character of

the city and it is seeking State Government legislation to protect and preserve the area and its buildings.

Another building the society wish to see retained is the P & O hotel (left) which we understand got its name because of P & O's long association with the sea port city.

## Transport men get new chairman



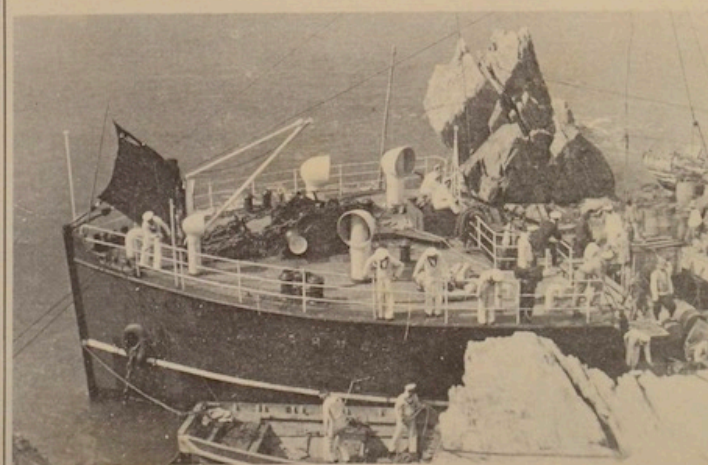
Mr J E Israel, FCIT (above) Manager of the Cargo Services Division, P & O Australia Ltd, has been elected Chairman of The Chartered Institute of Transport, NSW Section.

The Institute was formed in England in 1919 and was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1926. The NSW Section was formed in 1934.

Mr Israel said, "The Chartered Institute of Transport is the only professional body which incorporates all forms of transport - sea, road, rail and air. In doing so, it creates a forum for the exchange of ideas.

"This promotes a better understanding, not only of individual problems in the business but those affecting the industry as a whole."

## A tight squeeze for Chusan



From 3rd Officer M J Howorth of Oriana we have received this very interesting picture of the old Chusan. The picture - given to Mr Howorth by his father Captain Howorth - is printed on a postcard, and written in ink on the address side is the date 1 October 1932. What Mr Howorth would like to know is how the liner got into such a position and where? Can any reader help?

Editors note: There have been three Chusans. The first was built in 1852, the second in 1884 and the third, of course, is the vessel still in service.

The second Chusan was built by Caird and Company, Greenock and had a speed of 15 knots.

She was sold in 1906 to Bombay owners and was finally broken up in 1908.

## Members

The NSW Section has 550 members. Membership is limited to those who have successfully completed a special 4-year examination course or who have gained recognition in the transport field by national eminence.

Mr Israel, as Chairman, is also an ex-officio member of the Council of the Institute in Britain.

He joined Birt and Co in 1942 and when Birt and Company merged with P & O in 1967 became Freight Superintendent, Planning. He was appointed Manager Cargo Services Division, P & O Australia Ltd, on 1 January, 1972.

O L Buggé looks back to the days when P&O's West End office was a hive of activity and the "local" was the Two Chairmen

I hope I may be forgiven for yet another glance backwards which is a habit perhaps of the elderly, but I feel I must record a valediction to the West End Office with which so many of us have been associated in one way or another.

Doubtless there are readers who have special memories of other buildings belonging to the company particularly the old "122" with its labyrinthine corridors and stairs, stately boardrooms, well-appointed offices and Bastille-like basements and cellars which, when it was a coaching inn, probably held wines and beers and victuals for the sustenance of the wayfarer. But it is about the old West End Office that I intended to write today.

A few weeks ago I was walking past No. 14 Cockspur Street, and caught sight of a notice in one of the windows. This announced that the office had closed and all enquiries should be addressed to Beaufort House. I peered with disbelieving eyes through the glass door upon the dim, empty booking hall and its vacant desks and shadowy partitions. No longer did the lights reflect in the beautiful curved panelling so carefully nurtured over the years by Reg Hilditch and his devoted band, and so much admired by generations of callers. It seemed impossible that a once so busy an office could look so forsaken and forlorn.

CLOSED BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

and mails had been lost at sea.

Thoughtfully I wandered round to Warwick House Street, to the rear of the office, to find the back door locked and the baggage lift motionless at the bottom, its gates shut - no Jim Osborne, or Paddy or other of his stalwarts ready to take in baggage. My thoughts went further back still. In my mind I saw that lift come up laden with trunks and suitcases and the gates open to reveal the shades of the heavy-moustached Spurrier and the tall spare Taylor. Harry and Harold Ford were there too; it was Harry who, that day in April 1928, a cheery understanding grin on his face, took charge of that tin box and green fibre trunk for shipment per Macedonia when, a tenderfoot stripling, I departed for Aden. What congestion and activity there were in those days when Carter Paterson's lorries were being loaded with baggage for conveyance to Royal Albert or Tilbury Dock. There used to be a notice requesting taxi-drivers to turn round before setting down passengers and baggage.

Problem

Across at The Two Chairmen, where many a knotty problem of berthing or interchange had been ironed out, or hospitality dispensed to a deserving agent, there were no familiar faces; even Ben had departed and the present incumbent "knew not Joseph".

Fifty years ago Cockspur Street presented a different

aspect from the one today. Then it was almost exclusively devoted to shipping with a leavening of banks and insurance companies. Indeed, most shipping lines had their passenger departments hereabouts with models of their ships soberly exhibited in their windows, a very restrained form of advertising compared with that of today. Close at hand, eager to feed us passengers, were the travel agents - Cooks, Drakefords, Escombes, Cox and Kings, Hewitts, and others.

At No. 14 all was bustle and ferment as passengers were booked and their idiosyncrasies met with suave efficiency and assiduous attention. The days immediately before a sailing were even more hectic as intending passengers called with their baggage at the rear of the office, or completed their bookings. At that time the busy outward and homeward seasons were very marked.

Every Friday on the dot with hardly a break, our mail ships would sail for India, the Far East, or to Australia, maintaining connections at distant ports with other lines, thus providing world-wide facilities for the traveller. To my impressionable youth, imbued with a romantic fervour for travel overseas, such a service to the public was timeless and indeterminate. Titled persons, viceroys, pro-consuls, Governors, Maharajahs, merchant princes, dowagers, missionaries, planters, and such like - a cross-section of Empire - would always travel by P&O; that imposing office and all it stood for seemed as



The Cockspur Street office - decorated for P & O's centenary in 1937.

immutable and fixed as the stars in their courses. It was inconceivable that in the foreseeable future it would cease to function as a passenger office.

Sad

It is sad to record, nevertheless, that the inconceivable has come to pass and the West End Office, as so many of us used to know it, is now no more. The outbreak of World War II abruptly curtailed its activities, and both sailings and passengers became sparse in consequence. Following the return of peace, after some "austerity" voyages and the merger with the Orient Line, there was some resurgence of its old glory, but times were changing; there was now no Empire to serve, and upstart brush travel-by-air had usurped the older established, well-tried travel-by-sea as a means of transportation - why must we be in such a

hurry? So for all sufficient reasons it was inevitable, I suppose, that it should be found more convenient to operate the passenger department from Beaufort House, and in consequence, that the office should shut its doors at last. I hope that at least its future will not be an ignominious one - that it will not be put to any pagan use - that it will continue to function in a different but becomingly dignified guise. Whatever its fate I would like to remember the West End Office as it used to be - as "once a centre of busy interests" with "many goers-in and comers-out".

Elegant

The booking hall was, I think unusually fine and elegant with its polished mahogany panelling, seascape murals and painted ceiling; spacious and redolent of the age when the steamship was

supreme. The U-shaped counter, which kept us aloof from the public gave way to interviewing desks conducive to a warmer approach to the business of booking a passage; these in turn were supplanted by others of a more modern but still intimate design. Other changes took place over the years, but nevertheless, the office seemed to me to retain always something of a period less frenetic than that of today with its different outlook and emphasis.

Veterans

As we "lean annuitants" pause and look back upon those lordly days the veterans of yesteryear, who manned the office then, stir and quicken in the mind, resurrected from memory's limbo: FH Grosvenor, RWT Mortlock, Gordon Taylor, A B Hope, Duncombe, Chapman, Burleigh, Buckler, Pettman, James, Jimmy Dewar, Naylor, the two Marvins - "Badger" and "Sailor" - "Square" Beverley, Jimmy Masters, Garrish, Attwood, Pettitt, D T McPherson, Richard Rolt, Ken Smart, Miss Gear, Miss Prentice, Miss Nash, and a host of others.

Stalwarts

The latter-day stalwarts who succeeded them, now ensconced in Beaufort House, have their particular niche too in the West End's valhalla. They form the valiant rearguard of kindred spirits likewise in association to be most warmly cherished in retrospect.

Sic transit gloria indeed!

Reminded

I was reminded of Charles Lamb's essay "South Sea House" in which he describes so evocably the faded glories of that building which once stood near Bishopsgate - "with few or no traces of goers-in or comers-out - a desolation something like Balclutha's". We have something in common with Charles Lamb, himself a "lean annuitant" like so many of us now. He was employed for two years with the South Sea Company before making a career with the Honourable East India Company from whose service he retired after 33 years. It was from this historic Corporation that the P & O, in its early years, took over the mail contract for the Suez/Bombay section of their route following an incident when the mails had been transferred at Aden from an East India Company's vessel, which had broken down, to a native dhow, and both dhow



Sandy Stirling

Mr Sandy Stirling has left P&O for two years - and become a civil servant. Under an interchange scheme between industry and the Civil Service, Mr Stirling has been seconded to the Department of the Environment, in which he has been appointed an assistant secretary in the New Towns Directorate.

Mr Stirling has been with P & O for 23 years and until his temporary transfer to the Civil Service was our Passenger Division Development Manager. He was also Project

Leader for the Spirit of London.

Another familiar face now missing from our Passenger Division is that of Mr James G Davis, former General Marketing Manager, who has left the company to join merchant bankers Kleinwort Benson as shipping adviser.

Mr Davis joined P & O in 1952 after serving in the Royal Navy from 1946 until 1949. After working in various departments he went to Calcutta in 1953 and then served in the company's

agencies in Kobe and Hong Kong.

He returned to head office in 1957, was appointed assistant to the management the following year and became an assistant manager in 1960. He was appointed a general manager of P & O Lines Management in January 1966 and also a manager of the P & O SN Co a year later.

He became a director of P & O Lines in 1968 and remained on the Board of that company until the formation of the Passenger Division in October 1971.



Jim Davis

Sandy Stirling seconded to Civil Service

# Family turns its back on the rat race

Secretary Lynn Rainbow and her husband John have turned their backs on London town — and headed for a new life 500 miles away in the Scottish Highlands.

With Lynn's parents Mr and Mrs John Ramage, and her two brothers Tom and

Iain, they have moved into a hotel, which Mr Ramage bought a few months ago so that he could get away from the rat race.

A converted country house dating back to 1881, the hotel — its full name is the Ossian Hotel — stands on the A9 road to Inverness in the lovely village of Kincaig.

It overlooks the Cairngorm mountains and behind are the Monadhliath mountains. Nearby is Loch Insh through which runs the River Sply.

The hotel sleeps 30, in the grounds are stables and an apiary and only a stone's throw away are ski slopes, a golf course a canoe club and a Highland wild-life park.

Mr Ramage, a textile merchant, was born in Scotland but brought up in Palmers Green. He lived there for 48 years before moving to Enfield two years ago.

Son Tom — a newspaper reporter — has now got himself a job on a Scottish newspaper and Iain has transferred from Enfield Grammar School to a school near his new home. Lynn and her husband — a former 2nd cook in Canberra — also lived in Palmers Green.

"I spent my life in the textile trade," said Mr Ramage, "just as my father did before me. Now it has become too much of a rat race — it always was but it has got worse and worse."

"Now, before we are too old, we want to get to an area we are fond of."

# Police escort gets 'em to the ship on time

Twenty Australian passengers were given a joy-ride they'll never forget when they were rushed through the centre of Sydney with a police escort to catch their Christmas cruise. They made it with only moments to spare.

The rush began at Sydney Central Railway Station, through peak hour Christmas mid-city traffic to Circular Quay after their Melbourne train had been delayed en route to Sydney because of heat-buckled railway lines from above century temperatures.

The train arrived in Sydney at 10.20 am — and Oronsay was due to sail at 11.00.

The departure time for Oronsay could not be delayed because Oriana was due to berth at mid-day from her pre-Christmas cruise.

Sydney Office arranged a fleet of hire cars to meet Oronsay passengers at Sydney Central and with help of the Police Public Relations, arranged a special police escort through the traffic.

Traffic lights were turned off and with the new 'wah-wah' sirens bleating, they took only 20 minutes for the trip which can take anything up to almost an hour through heavy traffic.

Peter Arnold, Publicity Manager, P & O Australia, said both police and railway co-operation had been magnificent.

"We could have held Oronsay in mid-harbour, but only for a short time".

One airline passenger, off-loaded from an earlier flight raced from the airport to the ship, only to find Oronsay had just sailed.

However, Sydney Office came to the rescue once more — they had a launch standing by and he caught the ship in mid-harbour.



Top: Captain J.R. Young IO David Brown, PLO John Pinks, Ship's Headmaster Bertram Crawshaw and Crew Purser Nigel Stuart performing the strong man act from the Appollos. Bottom: PLO John Pinks and Chief Officer Andre Miles — Tibble and Romeo in Romeo and Juliet.

# Cabaret act puts on show for £150

Three passengers offered to give £150 to charity after seeing some of Uganda's officers perform a cabaret act. One offered to give £100, another said he'd give £50 and the third put up a "fiver".

But there was one condition — they all wanted to see the show again!

Captain J.R. Young who started the cabaret in 1968 couldn't very well refuse. And the curtain went up a second time.

The money the performance brought in wasn't lying idle for long. Uganda has a floating fund to provide pocket money for underprivileged children who travel in the ship and during the vessel's Christmas cruise £50 was shared between 15 youngsters from an orphanage.

# Illusionist misses death by eighth of an inch

The Amazing Fogel returned to England aboard Canberra in December with a scar above his left eye to prove that his Russian Roulette trick is not a fake.

In a hotel in Salisbury, Rhodesia, the master illusionist reached the climax of his performance, miscalculated and was hit in the forehead by a rifle pellet, missing death by an eighth of an inch.

The trick involves three loaded air rifles and three marksmen from the audience. One of the air rifles is fired and replaced in the rack where it is indistinguishable from the loaded ones.

Each marksman picks a number from one to ten and whoever chooses the number Fogel previously predicted, selects a rifle and fires at Fogel while the others aim at two balloons.

On this night, two people had thought of number seven and it was the man who settled for number five instead who selected the unloaded rifle from the rack and fired at a balloon, while number seven marksman shot Fogel in the forehead.

Despite copious bleeding and pain, Fogel continued with the act and it was not until the next day that the pellet was removed.

Although this accident is the second and most serious in his career, Fogel continues to perform the trick and has been entertaining passengers on board Canberra with his baffling illusions.

His wife witnessed the incident and says she will never watch him perform that trick again. Nor his other unique feat of catching 0.22 bullets in his teeth which he has performed the world over and once with breathtaking success on the Dave Allen Show.

True to his reputation for trying anything once, Dave Allen was all set to catch a bullet too, but as television audiences sat rigid in their seats around British firesides, the marksman fired at Dave Allen's face and he ducked out of danger, shouting that he had a right to change his mind.

Fogel has also confronted firing squads and caught as many as six bullets simultaneously and only once suffered any damage when in 1969 he swallowed a bullet at a performance in Cyprus.

"I love baffling the day lights out of people", the Amazing Fogel said. "I work my tricks backwards. First of all I think of an effect — an impossibility that will startle everyone — and then I think how to achieve this effect and the patter and style with which to present it".

# Chusan visits the Seychelles



◀ Captain J.F. Wacher (right) talking to Mr D. Wilkinson, District Manager, BOAC, Seychelles. Behind them are Chief Minister Mancham and Mrs Wilkinson.