

REARDON SMITH LINE LIMITED

newsletter

No. 67—August 1975

Introduction

This edition of the Newsletter will be known as the first one dedicated to a particular vessel. On this occasion it contains items submitted by the m.v. *Atlantic City* and we hope the effort will be well received. As the officers of this vessel were changed during the compiling of the Newsletter contributions have been received from the present officers and their predecessors. The next vessel to submit contributions will be the m.v. *Cornish City* for publication in the September edition.

Needless to say this is an innovation and was first prompted by our Chairman whose enthusiasm for the Newsletter is known to all.

Talking about enthusiasm and response reminds the writer of the often related story of the local cleric who was an enthusiastic angler. He visited his favourite pool almost every day to try his luck—but without success. His enthusiasm never diminished—he spent a small fortune on equipment, his fishing apparel was of the most expensive and sophisticated—at least one could safely say he “looked the complete angler”. However, his expertise was sadly lacking and results, or the complete lack of them, would never make a success story. One pleasant evening during the school holidays the cleric paid his usual visit to the favourite pool. Shadows began to lengthen across the placid water, spent flies began to float gently down, fly life was abundant and gradually the surface of the pool began to erupt as one beautiful brown trout after another rose to take the fly as it floated gently down. It was an angler's dream—the “rise” was on—just the time to hook a good specimen for supper. As the evening wore on and despite valiant and sustained effort—no result. Our friend sat down on the grassy bank and woefully surveyed the



M. V. ATLANTIC CITY LAUNCHED 10.2.67

scene. The fish began to rise again as if to manifest their confidence in their secure surroundings. Shyly and unobtrusively along came a small boy lost in the Utopia of the school holidays. No cares, no expensive and sophisticated equipment, certainly not looking the complete angler. He had, as did the cleric, enthusiasm and an eye for a good “rise.” Back came his make-shift rod and then a pleasant forward manoeuvre sending line and cast silently on to the face of the pool. The cast was perfect in its execution, the take was firm, the strike was timed to perfection and eventually a nice specimen of a 1½lb. trout lay on the bank. As all this occurred within five

minutes of the youth's arrival on the scene the cleric looked in utter confusion and disbelief—eyeing the catch with envious eyes he muttered aloud—“Well that's a bloody limit”. The youth left the scene of triumph for one and disillusionment for the other. On arrival home his mother asked him what he had caught, what kind of fish was it—like a flash back came the reply—well vicar Jones said it was a “bloody limit.”

It goes to show that we can acquire the best of tools and equipment for the job in hand but if the expertise is lacking results will be poor, but if the enthusiasm is sustained and the response adequate then, effort will gain its reward.

Return To Sea

This article is intended to give an indication of the differences, if any, between life at sea today, and how things were in the bad "good old days" of eight years ago. Of course, many who are reading these words will have been at sea for the eight years in question, and in certain cases for a lot longer than this (such persons are easily recognisable—they twitch). However, the impressions given here are those of one who has spent the past eight years working ashore.

Moreover, the author was previously accustomed to working on somewhat smaller vessels than the large, modern and efficient units of the current Reardon Smith Fleet (exclamation marks and question marks qualifying the preceding adjectives have been censored) n.b. (In the interests of authenticity, names and places have not been changed, although certain persons would have preferred to remain anonymous, see Newsletter for details).

Well let us begin at the beginning. Firstly we must leave aside the reasons why a normal, sane human being would carelessly toss aside such considerations as coming home each evening to a loving wife and family, having every weekend off, football matches, etc., etc. Such reasons defy analysis, but perhaps being mad enough to give up such a good life is in itself a qualification for joining those still at sea.

One of the main differences of course is the fact that nowadays a ship is joined for a set period, most crew changes taking place in foreign ports. No longer apparently, does one join a ship (in the UK or anywhere else) only "to go out and stay out" until some such indeterminate time as the vessel might return to the British Isles, or you fall down a hatch and break a leg, whichever is the soonest/least painful.

It would appear that shipping companies in general adhere as closely as possible to their specified length of voyage, and of course the amount of leave given is also more than it used to be (if I'm still here in six months time, consider the previous paragraph deleted).

Ships are still ships, thank goodness, at least in this company, and are not all ore/bulk/oil/general/barge carrying/converted aircraft carriers as some sections of the press would have us believe. Apart from facing athwartships and thinking what a long ship was the *Atlantic City* (work that one out, but I'll tell you I had

a surprise when I faced for'd), and apart from the fact that one hold on this vessel can carry about twice the *total* cargo of my previous ship, most things seem comprehensible. What with the craze ashore of changing everything in sight mainly just for the sake of it, from the educational system down to the number of flowers making up a bunch, I was quite surprised to find still in use such nautical phrases as "port" (still meaning "left" too), "starboard, and "what's for dinner chief?"

Masters are still Masters, the only difference being that people don't seem to bow down quite so low before them these days.

Mates still do all the work, and get the blame when anything goes wrong. It would be possible to say a lot about third and fourth Mates, but most of it would be unprintable, suffice it is to say that they always know how to get where they are going more quickly, more efficiently and in a far more superior fashion than the second Mate. Nothing has changed as far as that is concerned, that's plain to see. As for Cadets, well, Cadets always tended to be useless, nowadays they don't tend. "Lecky" and Sparks still baffle everyone on board being the only persons (allegedly) who understand electricity.

The engine room and ancillary equipment is probably more automated than on ships on which I have previously sailed. I wouldn't like to say whether engineers are more capable to be able to run them but their boilersuits get as black as they ever did, so things can't be that different.

Things that haven't changed—in the main part nearly everything I guess, hatches still have malignant personalities of their own, someone always pinches the chart pencil, the Mate still likes his beer, the menu never pleases all the people all the time, most ports are miles from any decent night life, the gangway always reaches the quay right by a bollard or crane wheel, the 12-4 watch gets all the stand-bys, the Chief only visits the E.R. on wet Sunday afternoons, Wolves always lose, Newcastle always beat Liverpool away, there are never enough people on board to form a bridge school, Bilges still only pump out when they feel like it, waving your arms in the air and jumping up and down is still the best way to get the crew to do anything (apart from learning to speak Indian!), no one ever knows where we're going next trip

(or even this trip sometimes), "subs" never go far enough, the customs always want a free dinner, a carton of cigarettes, or both, and reliefs will be greeted like long lost brothers by all concerned.

R. Alford, 2nd Mate.
2nd July, 1975.

During the depression of the Thirties a well known Shipping Company sent out instructions that wording of Radio Messages to Head Office were to be kept to a minimum. This was directed to a particular Scots Master who would send twenty to thirty word messages of positions, etc.

One day the following message was received from him: AM AGROUND TOTAL LOSS CREW SAFE AM WRITING MASTER.

Overheard in a London Pub from a Scot shocked at being charged 40 pence for a pint: "Hey Jimmy! If ye'd charged like that at Bannockburn Ye'd have won!"

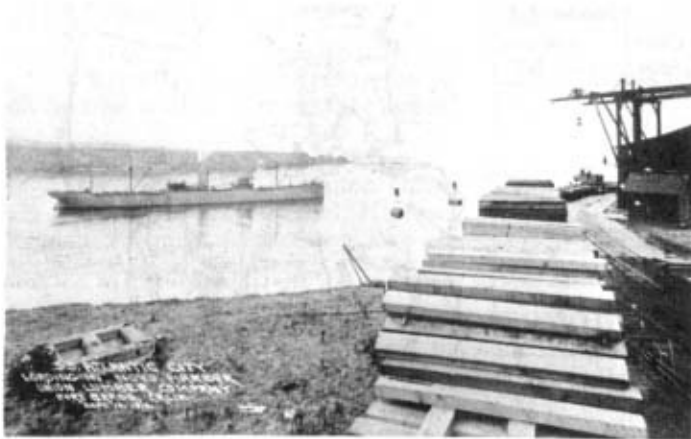
"Our economic future is what worr'es me"
Julius Ceasar said that in 55 BC.

D. R. Roy Catering Officer

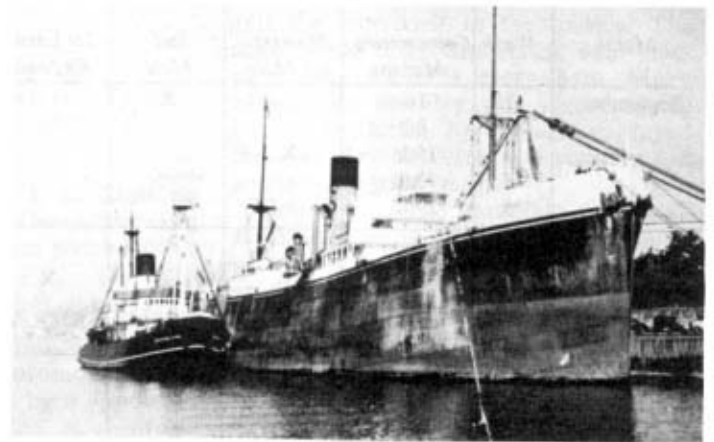


C. J. Bertram,
Radio Officer,
m.v. *Atlantic City*.

THE NAME IS THE SAME BUT THE DESIGN HAS CHANGED



s.s. *Atlantic City* 1912



s.s. *Atlantic City* 1920



m.s. *Atlantic City* 1941



m.v. *Atlantic City*—Today

A Passage Aboard m.v. "Atlantic City"

I joined the Company in January 1956, and was appointed for my first voyage on a rather smaller *Atlantic City*, built just after the start of the second world war. The vessel was berthed at Liverpool and I joined on a cold February afternoon, sailing a few days later. I received my first experience of the North Atlantic Ocean in winter, as the vessel proceeded to New York to load a cargo of grain for Alexandria.

Many changes have, of course, taken place since then and it was quite a coincidence when I was appointed to the present *Atlantic City*, on my first voyage as Master in 1973.

The present voyage commenced at Taranto, in June, where the vessel was anchored for ten days awaiting a berth to discharge her cargo of coal from Norfolk, Va.

News was received that the next cargo would be iron ore from Ilyichevsk to Italy, and we all looked forward to the

visit to the USSR, most of the Officers and Crew not having been there before.

Leaving Taranto, we headed for the Aegean Sea, and up to Point Helles, where the Pilot boarded at Mehmetcik Pilot Station in the early hours of the morning, for the passage through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus.

Not much was seen of the Dardanelles, but after crossing the Sea of Marmara, the vessel passed Istanbul early in the afternoon, and we were rewarded with a grand view of the city, with its imposing mosques, and the castles on the shores of the Bosphorus.

Vessel then proceeded up the Black Sea to Ilyichevsk, berthing at the iron ore loading quay, the passage from Taranto having taken a little over three days.

Port authorities boarded, and were very good, indeed formalities were very similar to those in the USA, apart from the two guards on the quay, who required to see one's discharge book, even

if the person was only going to read the draft.

Loading of cargo commenced soon after formalities were completed, the ore being loaded by five cranes using grabs.

Ilyichevsk is a fairly new port, and apart from the Seaman's club and the beaches, there aren't many places to go, however trips can be arranged to Odessa which is about nine miles away. Due to our short stay in port, not many of the ship's staff managed to get there.

Vessel completed loading and sailed two days after arrival, back to Italy once more. We are all looking forward to a longer sea passage next time, as three day passages to the Black Sea don't allow enough time for the necessary maintenance of the vessel.

B. Jones, Master
m.v. *Atlantic City*

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE EXAMINATIONS
PATTERN FOR EXAMINATIONS IN THE YEAR BEGINNING
1 SEPTEMBER 1975

Month	Week	Commencing Monday	Master/1st Mate	2nd Mate	1st Class Engineer	2nd Class Engineer	Master HT and Mate HT
September	1	1st		X			
	2	8th					
	3	15th	X				
	4	22nd					
	5	29th					
October	1	6th					X
	2	13th			X		
	3	20th	X				
	4	27th				X	
November	1	3rd		X			
	2	10th			X		
	3	17th					
	4	24th				X	
December	1	1st	X				
	2	8th					
	3	15th		X			X
	4	22nd			X		
	5	29th					
January	1	5th					
	2	12th					
	3	19th			X		
	4	26th	X				
February	1	2nd				X	
	2	9th		X			
	3	16th					X
	4	23rd			X		
March	1	1st	X				
	2	8th					
	3	15th		X			X
	4	22nd			X		
	5	29th					
April	1	5th	X				
	2	12th					
	3	19th				X	
	4	26th					X
May	1	3rd		X			
	2	10th			X		
	3	17th	X				
	4	24th				X	
June	1	31st (May)		X			
	2	7th			X		
	3	14th	X				X
	4	21st					X
	5	28th		X			
July	1	5th			X		
	2	12th	X				
	3	19th					X
	4	26th		X			

Notes

- (a) It is usual to attribute weeks commencing 30th or 31st to the following month. In the year commencing 1st September 1975 no Mondays fall on 30th of any month: the 31st falls on a Monday only on 31st May 1976.
- (b) Where examinations are affected by Bank Holidays they will run at the nearest possible dates.



“May I remind you, son, that when you attack religion, you set yourself against morality, against honourable tradition, against scholarship and against the only thing that stops you from becoming curry.”

K. Milburn,
Chief Officer,
Atlantic City.

Football Matches to Remember

By T. Lawson, Chief Officer,
Atlantic City—May 1975

No doubt at the start of the year, everybody was heard to say ‘Atlantic City—That’s the ship that is always in port’—Quite true—8 weeks in Constantza, Romania—the land of the gypsy.

But, undaunted, we have sat back watching all the reports on the R.S.L. Rangers, Fresno City XI, Leeds Utd, Sunderland and other football teams—without comment. Now we are leaving the fleet’s largest vessel we are proud to be leaving behind something that none of the other teams can boast of—fixed on the smokeroom bulkhead—Our Diploma for football, presented by the Sports Council of Romania to the vessel for playing two football matches (in temperatures of -5° Centigrade) whilst in Constantza, the scores 0-0 and 1-5 do not matter (even though we did miss a penalty)—the friendship between the Officers and crew with Constantza citizens being our reward.

Imagine, on our way down to Monrovia for an ore cargo, 3 months later, after threading our way through numerous Russian fishing vessels, complete with their attendant cargo and tanker vessels, to be suddenly chased by three large fishing boats—had we run over their trawls—US? But no—these were

continued on page 5

Staff News

RETURN TO THE OFFICE

We are pleased to report that Capt. A. J. H. Crowther has now recovered so well that he is able to attend the office.

IN HOSPITAL

Mr. J. M. Purvis of our London Office is in Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow, receiving treatment for arthritis. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

MARRIAGE

Congratulations and best wishes to Mr. M. E. Rayner, Chief Engineer, on his marriage to Miss Mary Gale at St. Edeyrn's Church Llanedeyrn, Cardiff on 12th July.

NEW STAFF

We extend a welcome to the following on

joining the Company:

Cardiff

Mr. R. Sewell, Drilling Rigs
Miss Janet Beere, Shorthand Typist
Miss Sharon Cornish, Technical.

SUCCESS

Congratulations to Mr. I. C. Stutt on obtaining his Master's Certificate, and to Mr. K. T. O'Higgins on obtaining his First Mate's Certificate.

PROMOTION

We are pleased to announce that Mr. K. W. Fulker has been promoted to the rank of Master, and has been appointed to the command of the m.v. *Maria Elisa*, Captain Fulker joined Reardon Smith Line in November 1972.

We congratulate Captain Fulker upon his promotion and wish him every success.

A Visit to Mt. Vesuvius

by Sue Stuart

Last May, we arrived in Bagnoli, a port in the Bay of Naples, to discharge iron ore. Mt. Vesuvius is an impressive landmark as you enter the Bay. Disappointment was expressed by many that the volcano was not smoking as we arrived. We were able to find enough spare time to visit the mountain. Mt. Vesuvius lies a few miles to the south of the city of Naples and is reached by road or railway, although from the train it is a long walk to the summit! After driving 12 kms. on the autostrada you turn off and use a narrow road with many hairpin bends which winds around the mountainside and up to just below the summit.

On the way up we stopped to visit a factory which produces cameos. This famous jewellery is hand carved with tiny chisels, each piece being a complete object and not glued together as many people suppose. The cameos are made from shells collected in the Indian Ocean, Malagasy and the Caribbean, each type of shell giving a different background colour to the cameo, usually this is brown, pink or green.

As we drove farther up the mountain our driver casually informed us that here was the spot where a coach went over the cliff killing 70 people, but not to worry as no-one had missed the bend so far this year. Looking fearfully out of the window I could see how easy it would be to have an accident, the gradients are very steep with sheer drops on one side. The higher we went the

better view we got of the Bay of Naples until we finally reached the end of the road. Here there is a restaurant and souvenir shop selling highly polished pieces of lava and various minerals dug from the lava flows. The lava stone is made into jewellery which gives the appearance of black glass, while the mineral is cut into large chunks to be used as paperweights or ornaments. We were now less than 1,000 ft. from the summit but unfortunately our journey had to stop here. To get to the summit you must use a chair lift similar to those used on ski slopes and there was too much wind that day for it to be operated safely. Apparently the crater is filled with ash and debris from the last major eruption which was in 1944, and a much smaller disturbance a few years ago. There is an observatory on the rim of the crater which is part of an international volcano watching organisation. This we could have visited had it not been too windy. Our disappointment was eased somewhat by an excellent lunch and a bottle of the local wine. This wine is famous locally as the grapes are grown on the slopes of the volcano, and the growers are in danger of having their vineyards wiped out when the mountain erupts. The wine is called *Lacrimae Christae* (Tears of Christ) and has a unique flavour due to the sulphurous soil it is grown in. The locals call it volcano wine but I never did find out if they meant the taste or the effect it had on the head.

The view from the lookout platform is superb as this is the highest point for miles around. The whole of the Bay of Naples curves away in a perfect crescent with mountains to the north and south and the city itself in the middle. The countryside is flat and fertile with vineyards and orchards everywhere. Many islands dot the Bay, the biggest being Capri and Ischia. We could have stayed there all day but time was running out and we had to leave.

Going down the mountain was much easier than going up and in a few minutes we were once again on the autostrada heading back into Naples. This time instead of driving straight through the city, we drove around it and looked at its fine buildings and squares. The first thing I noticed was the traffic, everyone seemed to be in a mad rush to get somewhere, jams and minor collisions occurred all the time. No-one appeared to care although they seemed to drive with the horn permanently in use.

Most of the buildings are very tall and narrow with brightly painted façades of pink, blue and yellow. The windows have shutters painted in a contrasting colour which gives a patchwork effect to the streets. Naples has three castles, Norman, French and Spanish, all of which are used as government offices. The squares or piazzas are large and airy with gardens and tree-lined boulevards linking them. Being a mere woman I was interested in the shops, which were the same as in any modern city although shoes, gloves and handbags seemed to be prominent items in most of them. Italy has long been famous for its leatherwork but the prices were very high, another sign of inflation.

A quick look at the opera house, an eighteenth century arcade of shops and it was time to get back to the ship. Seeing so many things in such a short space of time left me with a jumble of impressions but I'll always remember my day in Naples.

Football Matches to Remember continued

our Romanian friends, who wished to tell us they had read of our football exploits, when their newspapers had been delivered from Constantza, their home port. Personnel would no doubt be pleased to know that the fishermen are on 6 month trips without a break.

At last the fame of the *Atlantic City* was known not for being a Black Sea resident, but in the Atlantic Ocean for sportingly playing football against a Romanian team who were a third division side from Constantza.

SHIPS' POSITIONS AS AT 22. 7. 75

m.v. Alantlc City. On T/C to Compania de Navegacion 'Las Perlas' S.A. of Panama until January/March 1976. Completed discharge coal, sailed Taranto 24th June. Arrived Ilychevsk 27th, loaded full cargo Iron Ore, sailed 29th. Arrived Taranto 2nd July completed discharge, sailed 11th. Arrives Monrovia 20th loads cargo Iron Ore, sails 22nd. Arrives Italy 1st August to commence discharge, completing about 5th.

m.v. Cardiff City. Arrived and sailed Durban 19th June. Arrived Tachibana 13th July, completed discharge 15th sailed same day. Proceeds to British Columbia to load forest products on the B.C./U.K.-Cont. Service, loading Campbell River 29th/31st July, Portland 31st/1st August. Coos Bay 2nd/7th, Crofton 9th/12th Nanaimo 13th/14th and Vancouver 15th/17th. Arrives and sails Panama Canal 31st. Arrives London about 14th September to commence discharge completing Dublin 22nd/25th, Ghent 27th/28th and Antwerp 29th/1st October.

m.v. Cornish City. On T/C to South African Marine Corporation Ltd., Sailed Cape Town 20th June. Arrived Port Elizabeth 21st, sailed 26th. Arrived East London 27th, sailed same day. Arrived Durban 28th completed discharge, redelivered off time charter sailed 3rd July. Arrived East London 4th, due congestion sailed 5th. Anchored off Port Elizabeth, same day, returning East London about 27th/28th to commence loading maize. Sails 3rd August. Arrives and sails Singapore 19th. Arrives Japan 29th to commence discharge completing about 5th September.

m.v. Devon City. On B.C./U.K.-Cont. Service. Arrived and sailed Panama Canal 30th June/2nd July. Arrived London 16th to commence discharge, sails 22nd, arrives Antwerp 23rd, completing discharge 26th. Then proceeds to load steel products on the Cont/U.S.-W.C. Service. Sails Antwerp 29th July. Arrives and sails Panama Canal 13th August. Arrives Los Angeles 22nd to commence discharge, sails 24th completing Oakland 25th/26th, Portland 28th/29th, Seattle 30th/31st and New Westminster 1st September.

m.v. Fresno City. Arrived Rotterdam 21st June. Completed discharge, sailed 27th. Arrived New Orleans 13th July, loads cargo grain, sails about 24th. Arrives and sails Panama Canal 29th. Arrives Japan 25th August to commence discharge, completing about 5th September.

m.v. Indian City. On T/C to Yamashita Shinnihon S.S. Co. Ltd., until November 1976/March 1977. Sailed Panama Canal 22nd June. Arrived Houston 27th to commence discharge, sailed 1st July. Arrived Newark 7th, completed and sailed 8th. Arrived Baltimore 10th, loaded full cargo coal, sailed 15th. Arrives and sails Panama Canal 21st. Arrives Japan 14th August completing discharge about 20th.

m.v. New Westminster City. Sailed Kaohsiung 30th June. Arrived Keelung 1st July. Drydocked same day. Undocked and sailed 7th. Delivered on time charter to Broken Hill Proprietary on sailing Keelung. Arrives Whyalla 21st loads part cargo steel products, sails 24th. Arrives Port Kembla 28th completes loading and sails 4th August. Arrives and sails Panama Canal 30th. Arrives Matanzas 2nd September to commence discharge completing and redelivering off time charter 20th.

m.v. Port Alberni City. On time charter to Star Shipping A/S. Arrived New Westminster 21st June to commence loading forest products. Sailed 22nd, completing loading Portland 24th/27th, Eureka 29th/2nd July, Coos Bay 2nd/8th. Arrives and sails Panama Canal 19th. Arrives Rotterdam 2nd August to commence discharge, sails 3rd. Arrives Brake 4th, sails 6th. Arrives Nordenham 7th, sails 9th. Arrives Esbjerg 10th, completing discharge, redelivering off time charter and sailing 14th. Then drydocks U.K./Continent completing about 20th.

m.v. Prince Rupert City. On time charter to Atlantic Shipping. Arrives Bushire 16th July to commence discharge steel products, completing Khorramshahr, redelivers off time charter passing Muscat about 15th/30th September.

m.v. Tacoma City. Delivered on time charter to Mitsui O.S.K. lines passing Buenos Aires 28th June. Arrived Sante Fe 30th, commenced loading part cargo Sorghums, sailed 2nd July. Arrived Montevideo 4th, bunkered, sailed same day. Arrived Bahia Blanca 6th completed loading, sailed 10th. Arrives and sails Durban 23rd/24th. Arrives Japan 14th August to commence discharge, completing about 21st, redelivering off time charter. Then proceeds to drydock, undocking 28th.

m.v. Vancouver City. Arrived and sailed Durban 23rd June. Arrived Visakahapatnam 10th July, completed discharge 15th. Delivered on time charter Japan Line Ltd., loads cargo ore, sails 22nd. Arrives Wakayama 4th August, completing discharge and redelivering off time charter 6th. Then proceeds to British Columbia to load Forest Products on the B.C./U.K.Cont. Service, arriving about 19th, sailing 5th September. Arrives and sails Panama Canal 17th, arrives U.K./Cont. 1st October to discharge completing about 15th.

m.v. Victoria City. Delivered on time charter to New York Navigation passing Key West 21st June. Arrived Houston 24th, loaded cargo plastic pipes, sailed 3rd July. Arrives and sails Suez Canal 20th/21st July. Arrived Bandar Shahpour or Kohrramshahr 30th completing discharge 1st/15th October, redelivers off time charter passing Muscat about 5th/20th.

m.v. Welsh City. On time charter to South African Marine Corporation until September/October 1975. Sailed Cape Town 21st June. Arrived Rotterdam 8th July to commence cargo operations, sailed 11th, completing Bremen 13th/17th, Hamburg 18th/21st, Rotterdam 23rd/25th, Antwerp 26th/28th. Arrives Cape Town about 15th August completing discharge Port Elizabeth and Durban.

m.v. Amparo. Arrived Ensenada 20th June, sailed 22nd. Arrived Wilmington 23rd, completed loading, sailed 25th. Arrived Yokohama 10th July, sails 14th to complete discharge Nagoya 15th/16th, Yokkaichi 17th/17th, Osaka 18th/18th, and Kobe 19th/24th, then proceeds into drydock undocking about August 9th.

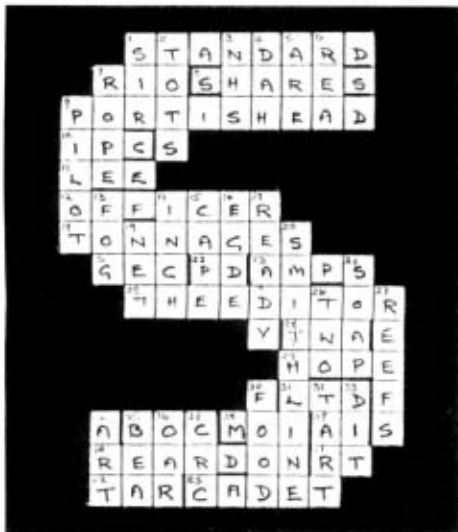
m.v. Elena. Sailed Kobe 28th June, arrived Nagoya 29th, sailed 30th, completing Yokohama 1st July/2nd, Tokyo 2nd/5th, Hiroshima 7th/9th. Arrives Ensenada 22nd, completing discharge Manzanillo, La Cardenas and Acapulco.

m.v. Gela. Sailed Hamburg 28th June. Arrived La Havre 29th, sailed 5th July, completing Antwerp 6th/8th and Hull 9th/16th. Arrive. Tampico 1st to commence cargo operations completing Vera Cruz, Coatzacoalcos and Progreso.

m.v. Maria Elisa. Arrived Yokohama 2nd July, sailed 5th. Arrived Nagoya 6th, sailed 8th completing Osaka 9th/10th, Kobe 10th/16th, Yokohama 17th/18th, Tokyo 18th/20th, Nagoya 21st/22nd, Kobe 23/25th returning Ensenada, Manzanillo and Acapulco.

m.v. Sara Lupe. Sailed Tokyo 20th June. Arrived Ensenada 5th July, sailed 7th. Arrived Manzanillo 10th July, sails 16th completing Acapulco 18th/21st, Salina Cruz 22nd/24th, Corinto 26th/29th, Ensenada 5th/7th returning Yokohama 22nd August.

Ship Adoption, Task or Pleasure?



Many thanks to Mr. John Thorn, Personnel Dept, Head Office for the following Crossword:—

ACROSS

- 1 Liquid Vessel?
- 8 Cotton is well known for this (8, 5)
- 11 Disappointing to see a pub thus
- 12 Garbled budge in the Port Health request?
- 13 Root of the ship?
- 16 Disbeliever
- 17 Time building a ship?
- 18 Little balls found in full cargoes?
- 20 Maybe a general loss
- 21 Kinds of potato
- 22 Shore must for gearless types?
- 23 Mixed race in this area!
- 26 Especially applies to loose cargo (4, 3, 6)
- 27 Creates harder work for the lookout man? (1, 5, 3).

DOWN

- 2 Well known oilman?
- 3 Is the master in such a position?
- 4 You may see this "lad" in the channel
- 5 Related
- 6 Beer restrictions at certain ports? (7, 6)
- 7 Agreement with Army top brass? (7, 6)
- 9 Do watchmen have one? (1, 5, 3)
- 10 Not much time ashore when you see this (4, 5)
- 14 You may have to wait for these
- 15 The sea has been so described
- 19 Indian chiefs?
- 20 Amy may be seen in a nest
- 24 You should be able to.
- 25 Each mixed produces pain

About two years ago, whilst on a four months voyage on a tanker, I saw on the ship's notice board, a plea for help. It was a letter from the British Ship Adoption Society, asking for volunteers to form personal links with British Schools.

I have always been fascinated by children, and writing to them seemed like a good way to pass the few idle moments I had on those fully automated, air conditioned vessels. There was also the prospect of visiting a school during my leave, this part sounded good, for even if I didn't get a girls high school, there are always plenty of attractive female teachers around, so I decided to have a go.

My letter to the Ship Adoption Society was welcomed with open arms. They asked me what sort of school I wanted, and after telling them I wanted one within ten miles of my home, they sent me a list of four to choose from.

As I didn't know anything about any of the four schools, I chose the one with the most modern looking building, in fact the school I chose was the first purpose built, middle school, in England, built soon after the comprehensive system started. It has turned out to be quite a famous school, and the BBC have made three films there, all of which have been screened on BBC 2, in programmes about comprehensive education.

I decided that my first visit to the school would be an exploratory one, where I would meet the teachers, but not the children just yet. After phoning the school and informing them of my

intentions, I duly arrived in uniform outside a single storey glass and concrete structure which was Milefield Middle School.

The first problem which confronted me was, which one of the many doors available should I use, in order to find the headmaster, but not the children. Well I couldn't have been more wrong in the one I chose for I walked straight into an assembly of the first year group, about ninety-eight, nine year olds. I hastily asked to be directed to the headmaster, and a very attractive teacher offered to show me the way.

As I followed her I breathed a sigh of relief, believing I had escaped the by now, even more frightening prospect of speaking to these children.

The headmaster and I, decided on the form that our link was to take, and, having achieved all I came for, I made as if to leave. Just then the head of the first year group came up to me and said: "They have been bombarding me with questions ever since they saw you, won't you please come and talk to them". Nervously, I agreed and prepared to make a complete fool of myself. I needn't have worried, the kids were marvellous, with questions like, "Do you lose many people overboard?" "Do you ever see whales or sea-monsters?" "Do you have a girl in every port?", I enjoyed every minute of it, and was sorry when the end of school bell went.

Since that time my link has gone from strength to strength. I visit the school for a whole day when I'm on leave, and frequently give illustrated lectures to the whole school. For their part, they write asking questions, and telling me the news when I'm at sea, and at Christmas, time I get hundreds of home made cards.

Outside the normal course of events, I have played in the Staff v. Pupils football match, which we won, and have even taken a party of twenty pupils around the City of York. My hobby is electronics, and so on the insistence of the science master, I have started an electronics club by proxy, with some of the fourth year boys, we are making a digital computer at the moment.

In conclusion, I can only say that ship adoption on a personal link basis, has been for me a great success and in every way a pleasure. I can thoroughly recommend the scheme to anyone who likes children, and has some spare time available.

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