

REARDON SMITH LINE LIMITED

newsletter



No. 92 — SEPTEMBER, 1977

FRIENDS REMEMBERED

TRUE STORY No. 1

THE DATE: 1941; the ship: *Madras City*; the place: a Lagoon off Bermuda where the vessel was awaiting the assembly of a homeward convoy and many days were ticking by while sufficient ships were being collected to make up a reasonable convoy.

The fare on the ship was not exactly to Cordon Bleu standards and would certainly not have merited a mention in the Michelin Guide. The Third Engineer (who later became a Senior Superintendent) hailed from a famous fishing town, and announced his intention of improving our diet by providing a fare of rich wholesome seafood which would restore our flagging energies. This might have sounded rather boastful but the sea-bed some 40 feet below could be seen quite clearly, and Jacques Cousteau would not have needed any floodlighting to take photographs of the millions of fish-life of every possible dimensions which streamed passed the ship.

To this end his duties with R.S.L. were sadly neglected while some fearsome looking fish hooks were manufactured and suitable lures impaled on them which the Third explained in great detail would each attract a different type of fish. In due course this was hung over the stern and the whole ship's company watched the fish going by, anxiously awaiting the first tug on the line. Alas, there was none, and gradually all the interested spectators drifted away to other pursuits.

While this was going on the Arab firemen had obtained a badminton net from some source, lowered this into the water, and by hauling it out with great rapidity were able to snare large numbers of fish which they proceeded to cook for themselves with the beautiful aroma of fresh fish emanating from the galley.

In the fish world there must be fish who are short-sighted, or possibly even some who are blind. One can also appreciate that a fish carelessly swimming around and looking at his girlfriend might carelessly bump into one of these fearsome hooks

and be impaled thereon. However, it was not to be and three weary days passed with not a single bite!

On the third day the Master went ashore and on return announced that the convoy would leave at 8 o'clock, engines were to be got ready and a short trial run to this end. The Third Engineer went forlornly aft to heave in his fishing line and presently we heard a tremendous shout from aft and the Third appeared with a large flat fish still wriggling violently. The Officers duly gathered around and admired the fish which had finally been snared on the Third Engineer's line but when enquiry was made as to the large hole in the fish's tail, the Third Engineer shamefacedly admitted that when hauling in the line the fish swimming past had been hooked in the tail and this was his only success in three days of intensive fishing.

THE TECHNICAL Department, Head Office.

We are grateful to the contributors featured in this edition who are members of the above department.

With the advent of the age of Technology, nowhere has the impact been more pronounced than in this department.

It used to be referred to as the Supers' Department. The department has grown—the name has changed—but its functions remain.

The department still has its Superintendent Engineers and Deck Superintendents but in addition there is the Radio/Electronic Section, Electrical Section, Costing Section, Cargo Superintendent, Planned Maintenance Section, clerical and typing staff. Such briefly is the composition of this department. Each section with its own sphere of responsibility, all combining in the end to keeping our vessels in good order to traverse the oceans carrying the commodities world trade has to offer.

An Incident Recalled

THE OTHER day a letter arrived in the Personnel Department from Mr. W. J. Watkins of Ilfracombe whose son wished to "go to sea" and it seems follow in his father's footsteps. Mr. Watkins commenced his career at sea with our Company as a Deck Boy on the *Botlea* in 1942. The Master was Captain T. W. Picton Davies. He remained until the termination of the war. He was promoted by Captain Davies from J.O.S. to A.B. (which was unusual). The promotion came at Accra in 1944 for his part in retrieving the anchor and cable on the port bow which had parted due to heavy ground swell.

Stargazers

BUILT ON top of the 12 storey Social Studies Section of Cardiff University College is a dome which houses the Observatory's new telescope. It cost in the region of £25,000 and will be open for visits by the public, probably at weekly intervals.

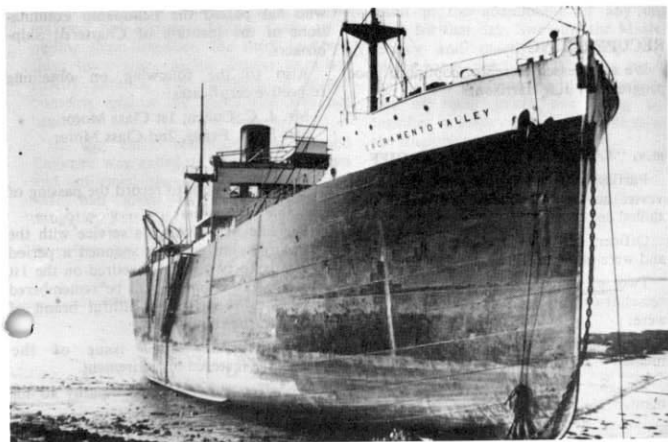
The Observatory was opened in June after two years of planning and was financed by University Funds and a grant from our Company.

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AT 11.00 on Friday, 22nd of July, whilst on passage between Ensenada and Yokohama the m.v. *Amparo* passed the cutter *Nadine 2*. The 37 foot sailing boat was en route between Honolulu and Vancouver, Canada, with three people on board. Her position was directly north of Honolulu, and about one thousand miles distant. The crew were in no difficulties, and a pleasant voyage was wished them by all.

M. J. CLARKE
Third Officer

More from the Archives



s.s. "SACRAMENTO VALLEY" ex "Skegness" ashore in River Severn below Sharpness whilst outward bound in ballast.



s.s. "BRADGLEN"—berthing Capetown.

Later sunk by acoustic mine in Thames Estuary including Chief Engineer Grier, 47 saved among them Chief Officer H. Fisher.

Contributions to R.N.L.I.

m.v. "Victoria City"

As the result of a "sponsored slim" by Mr. Jack Bonner, Chief Steward, the sum of £20 was raised and donated to the R.N.L.I.

ATLANTIC I

PHILLIPS PETROLEUM have signed a Contract for Atlantic I to drill one well, with the option of another west of the Shetland Islands.

Atlantic I is designed for deep water work. The new Phillips well is on the edge of the continental shelf in 720 ft. of water—much deeper than normal North Sea drilling locations. Atlantic I is designed for even greater depths and if required, could be equipped to operate in at least 1,000 ft.

The Contract for up to four months was important because it was vital to keep the expensive rig working for as much of the time as possible.

Earlier this year, after the acquisition by Ben Line Steamers of Sheaf Steam Shipping, there were changes in the structure of Atlantic Drilling which resulted in any equal interest by Reardon Smith and Ben Line. This allowed an arrangement to be concluded so that each company was able to become the sole owner of one rig—the Atlantic I being owned by Reardon Smith and sister rig Atlantic II by Ben Line.

Ben Line and Reardon Smith have come to an agreement over the pooling of the two rigs, which will be of advantage to the two companies over the joint marketing administration and operation of the rigs.

STOP PRESS

IRON HORSE

THE SWOOP of a bird as it glides amongst the seaciffs is a sight well known but wondrously free. In this time of mass commercial flying there is no such freedom of flight for the majority of participants, only the hang gliders enjoy this birdlike quality, and such sport is out for most of us.

Available to earthbound mortals is an opportunity to enjoy freedom of movement, the rush of air and a skimming control which brings delights and exhilaration to the enthusiast and practical advantage to all participants.

Many interests are widened as people of different skills occupy themselves in doing their own thing with the product as purchased: the engineer drools over the desmodronics, the student scientist calculates gyroscopic effects, the sportsman eternally strives to improve, and the "average" owner enjoys pride of possession by customising.

Should you add an Iron Horse to your stable it will not require grooming unless in use, which is much to be considered by 20th Century Knights to whom inclement weather may prove daunting.

As this barely acceptable pursuit has been legislated on by the law of the land all participants performing in public are to wear head armour, the artistic give vent to their talents in this area.

True enthusiasts are troubled by a small but undesirable rogue element who confuse the birdlike freedom with some idea that they are angels.

To anyone contemplating entry into the ranks it should be explained that great sporting events in different forms and demonstrating widely diverging skills are frequent happenings. Daily exhilarating experiences should be arranged away from the mass of unconverted who tend to be jealous and aggressive at unsolicited demonstrations of manoeuvrability when they themselves are immobile.

Whenever you need revitalising you may return to the scenes where the senses are keenest, the movements precise, sweeping, soaring through clear country air from seascape to forest.

Lonesome or twosome you'll enjoy motorcycling.

JOHN C. LEE

WHILST ON passage from AVILES to Houston on 9th July last, the m.v. *Gela* passed the sailing yacht *Connie* which was on passage Madeira to Bermuda. Captain Lindsay reported that in response to a request from the yacht's Master, his position was transmitted by W.T. to the U.S. Coast Guard. Another example of co-operation born of the sea.

CRICKET

THE REARDON SMITH Cricket Club continues to enjoy an excellent season, although the first defeat has been suffered on a very difficult worn wicket.

Richard Sewell in scoring 50 not out against Hope Athletic is the second batsman to score a half-century, a difficult feat in limited over cricket.

Despite some lapses in the field the bowlers continue to produce match winning performances, and the overall form has justified serious consideration of entering a side in the Cardiff Mid-week League in 1978.

Results:

12th July, 1977, at St. Fagans C.C. Ground.

Reardon Smith 71 in 19.3 overs.
Graig 66 for 6 in 20 overs (J. Jones 4—12).
Reardon Smith won by 5 runs.

19th July, 1977, at St. Fagans C.C. Ground.

Reardon Smith 85 for 8 (F. Leavers 33).
Gibbs & Co. (Newport) 84 for 9 in 20 overs (R. Sewell 2—13 and P. Beattie 2—17).

Reardon Smith won by 2 wickets.
22nd July, 1977, at Penarth Athletic Ground.

Reardon Smith 50 all out in 19.2 overs (F. Leavers 22).
Dow Corning 53 for 8 (F. Leavers 3—3).
Dow Corning won by 2 wickets.

27th July, 1977, at Penarth Athletic Ground.

Reardon Smith 109 for 8 in 20 overs (R. Sewell 50 not out).
Hope Athletic 64 all out (P. Beattie 2—5, G. Johnson 3—2).
Reardon Smith won by 45 runs.

"Golden Oldies" Match

28th July, 1977, at Penarth.
Gerry Taylor's XI 82 for 5 (J. Bendon 21 not out, A. Collett 1—3).
Leslie Allerton's XI 73 for 6 (C. Moore 17 not out, R. Burston 3—4).

This match produced a number of fine performances from the older members of the Cardiff Office Staff and Directors. Some of the players are already known to the Reardon Smith Cricket Club selectors, but there were other "promising" performances particularly the all round performance of Mr. Roy Burston who scored 12 runs and took three wickets for 4 runs.

Hospitality to the two teams and supporters was provided by the Company at the Glamorganshire Golf Club, Penarth, and was very much enjoyed and appreciated by all present.

A Thames Signal Station Closes Down

THE COAL Factors' Society has announced the closure of its signal station from midnight 31st August, 1977.

It is interesting to note that this station has been in existence for well over 200 years and provided what in the past was an invaluable and necessary service to ship-owners, agents and the personnel who man their ships.

"Changes and improved methods of communication together with a reduction in the number of vessels using the Thames has made the decision inevitable."—sa Mr. Charles Stephenson Clarke, the Chairman of the Coal Factors' Society.

The service was started by the Coal Factors' Society in the 18th Century to determine the order of berthing for discharge of collier brigs in the Pool of London; this being governed by the order in which the brigs passed the Coal Factors' Signal station. Information was originally passed to the Coal Exchange by messenger on horseback, later by train and ultimately by telephone.

The radio and radio/telephone, by which ship and shore can converse before a vessel even enters the river, radically altered the scope of the service provided, but the reduction in traffic on the Thames has been the deciding factor.

In its heyday, the Signal Station handled 1,000 ships a month; currently the number is 100.

Coos Bay

v.

m.v. "PRINCE RUPERT CITY" (Rangers)

AN ENTERTAINING and detailed report was received from Mr. G. B. Pugh, Junior Fourth Engineer, on the above Football Match which took place on Saturday, 30th July, 1977.

"Prince Rupert Rangers" won the match by 6 goals to 3. It seems this was a creditable performance as the Coos Bay XI won their local league in Oregon this season. Apparently it was also the first occasion on which Coos Bay had been beaten by a team from one of our vessels.

STAFF NEWS

BIRTH

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. John Stanton, Head Office, on the arrival of Anne, 3.475 Kilos (7 lb 10 oz) on 22nd August, 1977.

ENGAGEMENT

Congratulations to Miss D. P. Bowkett (Technical Department, Head Office) on her Engagement to Mr. J. Everest on 13th August, 1977.

NEW STAFF

A welcome is extended to the following on joining the company:

Miss E. K. Elkington, Telephonist, London Office.

Miss C. Salter, Shorthand Typist, London Office.

RECUPERATING

We are pleased to report continued good progress for Jim Harrison.

m.v. "TACOMA CITY" AT CARDIFF

Parties of Head Office staff visited the vessel at Cardiff Docks and were entertained on board.

Officers of the vessel visited Head Office and were taken around each department.

Two of Head Office staff joined the vessel at Cardiff for a trip to Tilbury, they were:

Mr. F. W. Thomas, Accounts Department.

Mr. S. Donovan, Purchasing Department.

EXAMINATION SUCCESS

Congratulations to Mr. Bruce Gully of the Chartering Department, Head Office who has passed the Fellowship examinations of the Institute of Chartered Ship-brokers.

Also to the following on obtaining respective certificates:

Mr. J. C. Cullen, 1st Class Motor.

Mr. P. H. Evans, 2nd Class Motor.

DEATH

We deeply regret to record the passing of Mr. J. D. Chatten.

The late Mr. Chatten's service with the company as an engineer spanned a period of nearly forty years. He retired on the 1st January this year and will be remembered for his own particular faithful brand of loyalty to the company.

The February 1977 issue of the *Newsletter* featured his retirement.

We offer our deepest sympathy to his widow and family.

m.v. *Orient City* at Southampton

WHEN VESSEL entered King George V Drydock in March of this year for her first drydocking, an early visitor was Mr. Albert F. Lester, one of our retired Chief Engineers.

We were very pleased to receive Mr. Lester's letter together with some photographs of the vessel.

Mr. and Mrs. Lester are both keeping well and send best wishes to all.

TRUE STORY No. 2

SAME SHIP, same Third Engineer; Place: anchored off Lagos with atmospheric temperature about 95° and the humidity the same, so that after a few minutes work in the engine room sweat was squelching out of one's shoes. The third Engineer's wife was expecting a baby, and it was made clear to the assembled company that this was to be no ordinary baby and that in the event of its successful arrival after great medical problems, work would be abandoned, and duties with R.S. neglected in favour of a large celebration, "wetting the baby's head."

In the event it was pointed out to the Third Engineer that the local native women while tending crops in the field gave birth to a baby and then continued tending their crops. The Third Engineer when being told of this explained, in gruesome detail, all the medical details involved, and that in the event of a successful birth he proposed to totally abandon his duties for that day! Normally, the Dynamo and feed pump were shut off as excessive expenditure of a quarter of a ton of fuel a day was involved in providing this high level of hotel services, and with work proceeding in the engine room, each time a launch was heard bumping against the ship, the Third Engineer abandoned work and went up on deck to see if there was any news of the new arrival.

On this particular day, it was necessary to run the Dynamo and feed pump as workshop machinery was in use and work

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was proceeding on the renewal of the super-heated main steam lines which involved filing the faces of the flanges, making new joints, fitting them, and pulling them together, the work involved sheer brute force as the flanges were not strictly parallel. The sound of a launch bumping against the ship's side was not heard!

In the early afternoon the Second Engineer was called to the Master's room and informed that the Third Engineer's wife had given birth to a bouncing daughter, Patricia, mother and child were

progressing well. With low cunning the Second Engineer realised that any announcement of this to the Third would result in the abandoning of any engine work for that day. Swearing the Master to secrecy and quietly proceeding to the engine room, the heavy laborious work on the flanges continued until 4.30 when the last of these joints was being pulled together in laborious fashion with most of the Engineers nearing exhaustion.

With the final bolt being tightened the Second gave out the news of the birth of the Third Engineer's off-spring and that

mother and child were doing well. The Third Engineer, spanner in hand, sweat running into his eyes, stared unbelievably at the Second who hadn't left the engine room for several hours. When the full implication that the Second had known about this for several hours and had withheld the information with a view to progressing the work on the joint struck home, the language used was something fearful and the Second retreated into the corner not liking the way the Third Engineer was brandishing the spanner about and showing all the indications of using it.

THE "RETURN" OF AN OLD FRIEND

(A Story of a Ship and a Man)

THE GOOD ship *Llanishen*, a 34,000 ton crude oil tanker built at Swan Hunter and delivered to her Owners, a local based Company, in January 1958 went immediately on "Demise Charter" as a unit in the Fleet of a major oil Company.

At that time, she was one of the largest and most sophisticated tankers afloat. Her turbines and water-tube boiler plant incorporating all sorts of complicated systems which, as she grew older, created many headaches and heartbreaks for her Engineer and Deck Officers and of course for yours truly—her Superintendent.

Nevertheless, she was a fascinating ship—for "when she was good she was very, very good—but when she was bad she was orrid"—a ship certainly full of character!

Appropriately her first Master was also full of character. A "big man" was Captain Martin Kattenberg hailing originally from the land of the Vikings—he was big in stature, big in mind, big in heart, a fine sailor, a big friend to all who sailed in his ship and shared his pride in her performance and appearance, and to these people too, Captain K was big in hospitality, specially when things were tough, like during breakdowns which were many, he always found some way to encourage and urge his people to keep going and "get the job done."

I well remember the many occasions when, beset by problems, the evaporators "dumping," the boilers "belching" thick black smoke, superheat steam joints that simply would not "take up" and after long hours "down below"—hot—depressed—angry and tired out, I would find Captain K in his dayroom (he never seemed to turn in),

relate my troubles to which he would always listen with interest and sharing my concern he would never fail but to say "NEVER MIND, SIR, HAVE A LITTLE SNORT—IT'LL CHEER YOU UP!!"

So encouraged and refreshed I would return aft and endeavour to impart Captain "K's" indomitable spirit to the Chief and his staff.

Yes! Captain K was a big man—a fine man, esteemed and respected by his Officers and Crew alike. The very steel of the ship seemed to have absorbed his wonderful spirit!

Alas! One day, suddenly, whilst on leave Captain K died, a fatal stroke whilst sitting in his garden overlooking the Mersey deep-sea anchorage.

It was no surprise that in his last will and testament he expressed his wish that his body be cremated and his ashes scattered from the deck of *Llanishen* as she sailed through the Red Sea.

The Company and the Charterers readily agreed and I was entrusted with the necessary arrangements.

The next time *Llanishen* arrived in the U.K., I remember it was the Shell refinery at Thames Haven, having collected the mortal remains of Captain Kattenberg, wrapped in a brown paper parcel, from the undertakers, I was struggling over the ship's rail with brief case and parcel when the old serving pump man, an Irishman, Paddy Crowe by name, came to assist me taking the "parcel" from me and carrying it as we clambered over the deck pipes. Paddy, usually full of chatter was, this time, strangely silent, but at the Captain's entrance he handed back the parcel, saying "It's great to have Captain Kattenberg back aboard the old ship, Sir!"

I was now reporting to the new Master, Captain Rice and it was only sometime later that the significance of Paddy's remark dawned on me—my brown paper parcel bore no label or identifying mark, just an ordinary parcel tied with string—could have been a box of school chalks! Furthermore, *Llanishen* had only just arrived from the Persian Gulf half-an-hour or so before I arrived aboard and no one knew I was coming—or why!

Did Paddy—just guess—or did he feel "that old spirit" back on board again?

In the familiar surroundings of his dayroom I explained the purpose of my visit and the contents of the brown paper parcel to Captain Rice who readily agreed to perform the last ceremony during the passage down the Red Sea. However, to satisfy Home Office requirements I had to obtain Captain Rice's signature for receipt of Captain "K's" ashes—so on the table I unwrapped the brown paper parcel. The "urn" could not have been leak-proof for a quantity of the "ashes" had spilled into the brown paper wrapping—without thinking I stood up and shook the spilled "ashes" on to the carpet and brushed them in with my foot just as one would the ash from a cigarette. I never gave this a thought!—but noticed Captain Rice, a man of great reverence—had gone very pale and silently bowed his head towards the spot on his carpet where I had brushed the ash—then in a rather strange silence we completed the formalities and I left the ship.

The brief stop in the Red Sea and the simple but moving Committal of Captain K's ashes to the deep was duly recorded in *Llanishen's* official log.

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Some weeks later, again I had to visit the *Llanishen* at a near Continental port, she was discharging cargo and the inevitable pumpman, Paddy Crowe on duty on deck was, as ever, my first contact. Full of his usual chatter about the voyage, the cargo and so on, but significantly he did tell me how, as the ship approached the warmth of the Eastern Medi, the Canal and the Red Sea the "old spirit" seemed to come over all the ship. Later discussing general topics concerning the ship, Captain Rice mentioned, somewhat hesitantly, certain "strange happenings"—the awareness of another "presence" on board, not a frightening one, but one which seemed to radiate warmth and friendliness! Knowing men of the sea to be superstitious and nostalgic—I shrugged these reports off, having more urgent material things to complete—*BUT*—about a year later my wife made a voyage on *Llanishen* from U.K. to Malta where the vessel was stemmed for drydocking, I flew out a few days later.

Captain "Nobby" Clark was at that time in command, his wife also made the voyage to Malta. It was in September 1964 and the weather after Gib was beautifully "Mediterranean."

After the first hectic couple of days of drydocking I was able to chat with my wife about her voyage from U.K. Apparently one evening as she and Mrs. Clark were sitting on the Captain's Deck enjoying a gin-and-tonic, they heard a strange "rustling" sound, as though someone had just come to the entrance from the day-room—they were sure they saw a shadow—it didn't frighten them at all—in fact they felt they *wanted* to meet and talk to it—on checking they could find no one at all in or around the Captain's quarters—it couldn't have been Captain Clark because they could see him above them on the wing of the bridge with the Mate! Although somewhat mystified they had another gin-and-tonic and tried to forget the happening!

A night or so later, my wife was sitting by herself in the same place on the Captain's Deck when she was aware of the same sort of "rustling" sound and this time—quite definite she was—she saw a large shadow disappear towards the Captain's Day Room—again there was no one about in sight—again she was not at all frightened and again—felt this almost overwhelming desire to rush to meet—and to talk to "it!"

Thinking back, I remember, I just accepted these stories—I was not in the slightest, incredulous—but with other things to occupy me—their memory became blurred and *nearly* forgotten.

Then, about nine months later, I had to spend some time on *Llanishen* preparing

specifications for Second Special Survey, so I joined her in Singapore and made several round voyages to Japan. In all I suppose I spent five-six weeks on board and then on my last evening before flying back to U.K., and being quite disappointed there had been no special "happenings," I was having a drink with the Master now Captain Dockeray from Southampton. As is the normal custom he placed a bottle of Gordons on the table and invited me to help myself, so I poured quite a reasonable "tot" and he poured one for himself. Chatting away about the forthcoming survey, when he was called away to a telephone call in the radio room, as he left he invited me to help myself.

It was a beautiful tropical evening and we were lying anchored off Pulau Bukom—all was quiet except for the hum of the turbo-alternator away far off down below—I picked up my drink polished it off and poured myself another—after all it was pretty warm and my job was completed—and I was very content—suddenly I heard a faint rustling sound behind me—turning quickly I saw a shadow facing me—I jumped up—I felt very happy—I advanced—hands outstretched in greeting—but the shadow faded as I approached—I was full of disappointment—but quickly, in the silence, a faint whisper—clearly, audibly, unmistakably—the words rang in my ears "NEVER MIND, SIR, HAVE A LITTLE SNORT, IT'LL CHEER YOU UP."

Happily my mind raced back over the years to my early days of life on board *Llanishen* I reached for the Gordon's bottle poured myself a measure, contentedly I was sitting thus—sipping my drink when Captain Dockeray returned apologetically for leaving me on my own, I said, "Don't worry Captain, I haven't been lonely"—He gave me a puzzled look and said, "Well what about a nightcap"—he reached for the bottle—he looked and looked—I looked and we both looked again—for although we had poured several drinks from it—**THE BOTTLE WAS STILL FULL—COMPLETELY FULL!**

GOD BLESS THE SPIRIT OF CAPTAIN KATTENBERG.

SIMPLE SAILORMAN

TRUE STORY No. 3

THOSE OF you who have watched "The Onedin Line" will be aware that old time Shipowners always liked to feel that their staff were gainfully employed. To ensure this, one of the activities encouraged was two hours of healthful, invigorating exercise, on the foredeck each day, with a few spanners and a roll of packing, so that

on arrival at the next port, the winches were in good condition for loading or discharging.

This same Third Engineer, with recent memories of 48 hours a week in civvy street with "OVERTIME" being paid for anything in excess, found it hard to reconcile the normal 56 hours + 12 hours (you didn't work on Sundays), i.e. 68 hours a week without overtime, with the cushy life ashore, and he protested long and loudly against this injustice, not appreciating the health improvement that resulted from his lungs breathing in good, clean, salt-laden air.

Finally deciding that enough was enough, when he came off watch one day at 4 a.m., he closed and bolted his door, so that when the Second gave a cheerful rattle to the Third's door at 8.15 a.m., there was a deathly hush from inside. Returning at 8.45 a.m., and rattling the door a good deal harder, the same deathly hush persisted and the Second gained the idea that perhaps the Third did not wish to participate in this health-giving exercise.

Levering open the quadrant-type ventilator in the bottom of the door, the Second noted the Third fast asleep on his settee, with a large bare big toe showing over the end. Getting his airgun and laying in the alleyway, the Second took careful aim and fired. There was an outraged yell of pain, anger and hostility from inside the room, the door of which was shortly flung open and the Third emerged hopping (literally) mad.

The Second meantime had rapidly retired to his room locking the door, which the Third soon reached, rattled, and shouted all manner of uncomplimentary statements, mentioned his considerable doubts about the Second's parents' matrimonial status, and even the possibility that *their* parents were unmarried.

When the fury had died down, the Third Engineer, realising he couldn't beat the system, meekly acquiesced, his work load gradually increasing with successive promotions until, when required, he worked the full 24 hour day required of all good Company Officers.

Instead of spending his apprenticeship attending night school and similar cultural activities, the Third Engineer had lived a rather riotous life, and his knowledge of mathematics was more in the sequential progression 36-24-36. However, the fortunate sequel to his acquaintanceship with this rather misguided Second, was that he decided that if a dumb . . . (crossword clue for a lump of earth) like that could get a Certificate, then anybody could, and promptly proceeded to obtain his, and so was successively promoted until he reached the high rank he attained prior to his retirement.

ANON.

SHIPS POSITIONS AT 24th AUGUST, 1977

Cardiff City. On Time Charter a/c Salen. Arrived Houston 16th August; expecting to complete discharge 26th. Proceeds to Mississippi River to load grain 27th August through 2nd September for Egypt. Possibly discharges Port Said or Alexandria, arriving 21st September, with uncertain completion.

Devon City. On Time Charter a/c Motortank. Sailed Naples 12th August for Albany to load grain. Arrives 24th August with expected sailing 1st September. Discharges Algeria (port unknown) arriving 13th September, completing 30th.

Eastern City. On Time Charter a/c Showa. Arrived Kawasaki 23rd August to discharge coal cargo. Sails 25th for Newcastle to load further coal cargo arriving Newcastle 6th September, sailing 11th. Returns to Japan to discharge at either Kawasaki or Fukuyama, arriving 24th September and completing 26th. Vessel then dry-docks Japan for about 5 days.

Fresno City. Sailed Kobe after drydocking 24th August. Delivers under Time Charter to Yamashita Shimihon on arrival Sakai, loading steel products Sakai 24/26th August, Oita 27/28th Kimitsu 30th/31st, completing Chiba 1st/2nd September. Transits Suez Canal 25/26th September, discharging Setubal 2nd/15th October.

New Westminster City. On Time Charter a/c Alianca. Arrived Puerto Cabello 4th August and expects sail about 8th October for Maracaibo where arrives 9th, completing around 20th October.

Ontario City. Sailed Vancouver 9th August with cargo wheat. Arrived Dairen 4th September to discharge, completing 22nd September. Next business not known.

Port Albani City. On Time Charter a/c Alianca. Arrived Rio de Janeiro 12th August, sailing on 24th. Arrives Sao Francisco do Sul 26th to finish discharging, completing 1st September. Vessel then redelivers from Time Charter, and sails for Paranaqua where delivers under further Time Charter a/c Oetker about 2nd September to load

grain. Sails 10th September for Continental port, as yet undeclared, completing and redelivering around 1st/5th October.

Prince Rupert City. On U.S.W.C./B.C.—U.K. Cont. Berth Service. Sailed Vancouver 13th August with cargo Forest Products. Transits Panama Canal 25th August. Arrives London to commence discharge 9th September, sailing 15th for Brake, arriving 17th, and sailing 19th. Arrives Rotterdam 20th September, completing 22nd September.

Tacoma City. Commenced loading steel Antwerp 24th August, sails 27th for Middlesbrough to complete 28/11th September. Transits Panama Canal 26th September, and discharges Long Beach 4/7th October, Oakland 8/9th, Portland 11/13th and New Westminster 14/16th October. Vessel then commences loading under U.S.W.C./B.C.—U.K. Cont. Berth Service, loading Nanaimo 17/20th October, Crofton 21st/24th, Vancouver (Wash.) 25/28th, completing Vancouver B.C. 29th/31st October. Transits Panama Canal 12th November. Arriving Dublin 25th November to commence discharge. Sails 3rd December, for London, arriving 5th December continuing discharge through 9th, and completes discharge Zeebrugge 10/13th December.

Vancouver City. Sailed Buenos Aires 18th July with cargo maize for Taiwan. Arrives Kaohsiung to commence discharge 24th August, with expected completion 5th September. Vessel then proceeds to Hong Kong or Japan for drydocking and repairs, completing around 20th September.

Victoria City. On passage from Antwerp with steel for U.S.W.C. Transits Panama Canal 26th August. Discharges Long Beach 4/6th September, Oakland 7/8th, Portland 10/12th, Seattle 13th and New Westminster 14/16th September. Proceeds onto U.S.W.C./B.C.—U.K. Cont. Berth Service loading New Westminster 14/16th September, Eureka 18th/21st, Coos Bay 22nd/25th, Crofton 27/30th and Vancouver B.C. 30th/3rd October. Transits Panama Canal 15th October and discharges London 29/5th November, Brake 7/9th and Rotterdam 10/13th November.

had discharged due to a broken wire, there was just enough power left in the battery to operate the V.H.F.

The vessel was slowed down at 16.44 when approaching the *Pikake* and then stopped close by the yacht. The sea was flat calm and they were able to send an inflatable boat alongside. We exchanged a fully charged battery for their flat one. We stayed around until they got their engine started and then continued on our voyage at 17.08 hours.

Amparo. Sailed Hong Kong 22nd August. Arrives Kudamatsu 26th August to commence loading Kanda 27/28th, Kobe 29/30th August, Yokohama 31st/2nd September and completing Nagoya 3rd/4th September. Then proceeds Ensenada arriving 19th September to discharge. Calls Manzanillo 23rd/25th, Acapulco 26/28th, Salina Cruz 29/30th September. Punta Arenas 2nd/3rd October, Corinto 4/5th, Cutuco or Acajutla 6/7th, Champerico or San Jose 8/9th, Manzanillo 11/12th, Mazatlan or Guaymas 13/18th and completes Ensenada 21st/22nd October before returning Japan.

Atlantic. Arrived Damman 5th August to commence discharge. Unloading is presently very protracted and completion unlikely before 20th September.

Elena. Sailed Ensenada 15th August for Japan discharging Yokohama 31/1st September, Nagoya or Yokkaichi 2nd/4th September, Osaka or Kobe 5/7th September, Keelung 10/11th and Hong Kong 12th September. Vessel then dry-docks from 13th to 21st September, after which she loads Hong Kong and various Japanese ports for Mexico.

Gela. Sailed Baton Rouge 20th August for Rio Haina (Dominican Republic), expect sail Rio Haina 27th August for Barcelona via Las Palmas and Tenerife. Completion Barcelona proceeds Savona, Naples, Leghorn and Genoa prior returning Vera Cruz via Marseilles and Valencia. ETA Vera Cruz mid October.

Maria Elisa. Scheduled sail Porto Cortes 24th August for Coatzacoalcos thence New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Completion Baton Rouge scheduled call Rio Haina thence Tenerife and Las Palmas. Sails Las Palmas 19th September for Valencia, Naples.

Sara Lupe. Sailed Cork 24th August for Bremen where due 27th. Further loading schedule very uncertain at time of writing, but eventually proceeds Vera Cruz, Tampico, Coatzacoalcos, Progreso, Porto Cortez, New Orleans and Baton Rouge completing end September. Vessel then proceeds Mediterranean ports for discharge and further loadings for Mexico.

m.v. Elena Assists American Yacht

AT ABOUT 16.15 hours Thursday, 18th August, the yacht was sighted fine on the starboard bow, shortly afterwards they called on the V.H.F. and asked if we could assist them. The *Pikake*, which was bound from Honolulu to Newport Beach, California with five people on board, had been becalmed for ten days. They were unable to start their engine because the battery

A radio message was sent to the U.S. Coastguard at San Francisco informing them of the position of the *Pikake*, and a private message was also transmitted advising friends of their safety.

D. B. JACK
Captain

SOUND ADVICE

“Do right and fear no man; Don’t write and fear no woman.”

A VISIT TO SHANGHAI

"OH YANGTSE, beautiful river, full of trout and carp and bream . . ." the words from Britain's top goalies were far from being echoed by the Officers of the *Devon City* as we nosed our way through rain looking for out-of-position buoys, searching for an out of position Pilot Vessel. A more miserable situation must be difficult to find, we thought.

However, once we had the pilot and the Harbour Master's representative on board things proceeded fairly smoothly. We were not allowed to use the echo sounder, nor check the ship's position. Unfortunately the whole transit of the Whangpoo river was made in the dark so we were unable to see much of the country, of which Westerners seem to know so little.

We berthed at 0100 and expected to commence discharge at 0600, working continuously. Things brightened considerably during the day when mail arrived and the Charterer's Agent let it be known that during the course of our stay various tours would be arranged. These, incidentally, were all free of charge but even without this incentive it was nice to know that we were to be able to see some of the city and country. It seems a pity that Agents in the Capitalist countries cannot motivate themselves in a like manner, especially in these days of long sea passages at slow speed and months-long anchorages. We'd even be willing to pay, honestly!

The first outing was that night to see the acrobatic team perform. A minibus collected us from the ship to take us there and as we drove through the town we received many curious stares as if we were the first "Foreign Devils" some of the people had set eyes upon. The performance itself was held in a building containing a circular ring. We were surprised to see two types of seat in what is supposed to be a classless society. We were placed on the cheaper, harder version so what conclusion can be drawn from that I shouldn't like to say. As the performance went on we were thankful that we had been so placed, as we were fortunate enough to be underneath a fan and it was rather warm in there. Also, we faced directly onto the stage access and all the performances were done facing in our direction. Amongst the performances were diving through hoops, cycling on a slack wire, conjuring, clowns, plate spinning and various other feats of acrobatics. Each act was done with a hint of comedy and the seemingly mundane would suddenly be turned into something of great skill and individuality. As regards

the conjuring we all had a fairly good idea of where the transistor radio went but everyone was mystified by the disappearance of the duck. It was suggested that it had been well trained.

After the show we were taken to the Seamen's Club. This is housed in the former buildings of the British Consulate and comprises a bar-restaurant, games facilities and the Friendship Store. This last has many bargains, which are sometimes reduced even further for seamen. An added attraction was the cheap food and drink in the bar-restaurant, and our wives, who were more adventurous than we, sampled such delights as Green Leaf Wine whilst we stuck to the local Seagull Beer.

A second visit to the acrobatics was arranged to permit the duty officers and some of the crew to see the performance and they reported that the acts were different to those seen by the first party. Other short visits were to a Jade Carving Factory, which left everyone very impressed by the skill and patience of the workers, and to an Exhibition of Chinese Industry.

The highlight of our stay was a visit to the countryside, which took a full day. We drove out of town for about an hour until we reached a small town, and there we embarked our hosts for the day, the leaders of a Commune. Our first stop was at a pig and poultry breeding farm. The most impressive thing about this was the lack of odour, which one would normally associate with such establishments in the UK. Here the comedians came into their own with such remarks as "Must be a pig of a job working here" and "Look! Chicken in the basket."

Lunch and refreshments were next on the agenda and over a cup of mint tea it was explained to us how the system worked. Agriculture is of prime importance, the theory being that without food people cannot perform any other tasks. By transplanting them can get three crops per annum, one wheat and two of rice. Thus they cram a growing period of 430 days into a year. Various statistics were quoted to us and we gathered that the particular county, in which we were, was the prime supplier of food to Shanghai. Various questions of the Communist System were asked and they seemed to have an answer for everything that we asked even though there were one or two tricky questions thrown in. All are allocated a job and each person must spend some time in the

countryside. If anyone should raise objections to this then they are "re-educated" until such time as their "social conscience has been raised."

After a feast, which was supposedly a normal peasant meal, we visited a machinery factory, a concrete-boat building factory and an agricultural tools factory. The concrete boat factory was of particular interest and they can claim to turn out one per day, each being of approximately 30 tons. They are built in six stages, from concrete frame assembly, through wire mesh covering to finally being cemented over and being set by steam. The only metal pieces are the deck fittings and the gunwale.

In each of these factories was a line of blackboards, on which workers who have attended a course, write the things they have been taught for the benefit of the others. It can also take the form of a suggestion box, both academical and political. From the general conversation we gathered that they work eight-hour-shifts with one day off per week, there is a pay/housing differential for supervisors and there is a social security system should anyone fall sick.

The finale of the tour was a visit to a Kindergarten. These are necessary as both parents of the children work, but schooling proper does not begin until the children are seven years old. The first thing we witnessed were children shooting from toy guns at caricatures of the "Gang four" and I found it a little disturbing that they should be taught hatred at such an early age. Other things, to which we were treated, were exhibitions of singing and dancing, and an art class, in which the children were painting our visit. Finally they ran around an assault course, which represented the Long March of Mao Tse Tung and rounded this off by throwing "hand grenades" at "tanks."

During our stay there was opportunity also to speak with the guards and customs officials who were on duty at the ship's gangway, when they came aboard for Smoko. From these and the visits many discussions on the merits or otherwise of the system were stimulated and some of us were accused of having been got at. Perhaps the answer as to whether everyone was happy with the system was given when the ship was methodically searched for stowaways before we were allowed to sail!

T. J. HUNTER
2nd Officer