

newsletter



No. 95—DECEMBER, 1977



Captain Whitting at the American Embassy receiving AMVER awards to several of our vessels from Rear Admiral Raymond H. Wood, U.S.C.G., Chief, Office of Public and International Affairs, Coast Guard Headquarters.

STAFF NEWS

BIRTH

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. D. N. Amey on the arrival of Simon Andrew on 20th September, 1977. (9 lb. 5 oz.)

Mr. and Mrs. A. Abel on the arrival of son Daniel.

RECUPERATING

Mr. Jim Harrison continues to make satisfactory progress.

NEW STAFF

We extend a welcome to Miss V. Roper, Telephonist, London Office.

DELAY IN THE MAIL

IN NELSON'S DAY mail from war-time England for the West Indies left Falmouth fortnightly and took only 45 days to reach the most distant destination, Jamaica.

Nearly two centuries later, in the age of moon walks and computers, experience based on 8 years in the Caribbean shows that surface mail from England takes sixty to ninety days to reach various islands in the West Indies.

Co-operation is the simple means whereby each one benefits more through the efforts of all.



**Christ
was born on
Christmas
Day**



NO ONE KNOWS the year, let alone the day, when Christ was born. The Gospel of Matthew states that it was "in the days of Herod"; Luke that it was at the time of Caesar Augustus's tax census. From this and from other evidence Bible historians have placed it anywhere between what we now call 8 BC and AD 6. The establishment of the calendar dating from the supposed year of the birth of Christ is thus fairly arbitrary.

Christmas—the "Mass of Christ"—was first celebrated a few hundred years after his death, at widely differing dates in January, March, April or September, according to local custom. Eventually it was fixed at 25th December, largely because that date coincided with existing pagan festivities which took place towards the year's end—such as Saturnalia, and the "Dies Natalis Invicti Solis" (Birthday of the Unconquered Sun) which the Romans celebrated, and the ancient Yule festival of northern Europe. The Eastern Orthodox Church, using a different system of calculation, fixed Christmas at 6th January.

Two important Christmas traditions are often erroneously believed to have been established in England for centuries—Father Christmas and Christmas trees. Father Christmas, or Santa Claus, is our version of Saint Nicholas, and was introduced into England from the Continent in the 19th century. Christmas trees were used in parts of Europe hundreds of years ago, and were introduced by German settlers into America in the 18th century. Although their use was known in England in the early 19th century, it was not until Queen Victoria married the German Prince Albert in 1840, and it was reported that they had a tree at the Palace, that the custom of the Christmas tree became widespread.

Tristan da Cunha

A FEW YEARS AGO the islanders of Tristan da Cunha arrived in this country with a view to settling here. In spite of every effort made to assist them, the call of their island home was too much for them. They returned to their island eventually, leaving behind a small number who had accepted the "new life".

In March 1910, the s.s. "CORINTHIA" arrived at the port of Rangoon. One of the ship's crew was a Mr. Richard Parker (father of our caretaker at Devonshire House, Mr. Richard "Dick" Parker). In beautiful penmanship he sent home from Rangoon an account of his ship's call at the lonely island of Tristan da Cunha.

On our passage across the South Atlantic from Rio de Janeiro to Port Natal we called at the island of Tristan da Cunha and a few details of that lonely settlement may be of interest to you, being that it is a place seldom visited.

Tristan is the largest of a group of three islands and the only one that is inhabited, it is situated midway between South America and South Africa in the direct track of vessels plying between River Plate or Brazil and South Africa. As we approached the settlement which lies on the N.W. end of the Island about 5.30 p.m. we observed two whale boats full of men which had to speak to us so the Captain decided to stop and try and get supplies.

The boats came alongside and finding that he could get what was wanted he ran and anchored off the settlement in 15 fathoms good holding ground and in less than 3 hours we had 2½ tons of potatoes, some fowls, sheep, eggs, and a few excellent cranberries which grow on the Island. The potatoes cost about one third of what they cost at Rio de Janeiro and of good quality for keeping. This information may be of use to some of your nautical readers who may be bound the same way.

We found the Islanders number just a hundred. They are the descendants of a detachment of troops sent out during the time Napoleon I was at St. Helena. These troops were withdrawn many years ago but a number of the families decided to stop on the island. They seem to be a fine healthy lot of men quite contented with their lot, they are most of them slightly coloured as the first women to go there were mulattoes from Cape Colony. They are all on an equality and all work for their common good. They grow all the vegetables and potatoes they need, they have also plenty of fowls, geese and pigs, about a thousand sheep and three to four hundred head of cattle and a great many apple trees, so they are fairly well off.

The village off which we anchored was composed of what appeared to be good solid one and two storeyed houses with white washed walls with a bit of garden in front—just such cottages as may be seen in any old English village.

The Islanders are all British subjects with the exception of two who are Italians cast away there from a burning vessel some 15 years ago. They are married now and have never left the Island since, so they evidently find it not a bad place to live in.

Up to a few years ago a Man of War used to call there bringing them stores from Cape Town but now the Government have discontinued it, which the islanders think a great shame. They say the Government have deserted them and they are now dependent on passing vessels.

They informed me that we were the first merchant vessel to anchor there to their knowledge. They sometimes sail 15-10-20 miles to intercept vessels. When we called they were expecting a schooner from Cape Town with supplies as they were short of many things.

We brought mail for them to Durban and left them all the books and newspapers we had.

I daresay our visit would be talked of for many a day and would be looked on as a red letter day.

One of the men has authority to marry and bury them, he also holds divine service on Sunday.

Their great desire is to get a small schooner of their own to run to Cape Town and keep them supplied with shoes, etc. but it is very doubtful if they will be able to do so, as although they have all they need to live, they have very little money. So I am afraid they will never get their schooner.

As we left the Bay the whole population was on the beach and gave us three cheers and an invitation to call there if passing the Island.

Hoping this will be of some interest.

RICHARD PARKER
Rangoon, March 1910

It sometimes seems to me that those who reach the top of the tree, often get there for reason that they lack the qualifications to retain their jobs at the bottom.

PETER USTINOV

TEROTECHNOLOGY

A COMMON CLICHÉ these days is "we live in a technological age." It really means "the old order changeth yielding place to new"—at least that is the way the "old uns", the "squares" and the "old fashioned" would interpret it!

A conference was held in London the other day to discuss Maintenance Management by Computer. Among the sponsors of the conference was the National Terotechnology Centre. It sounded important enough to ask the question "What is Terotechnology?" Certainly this was not for the "old uns", the "squares" and the "old fashioned".

Reading through a very well written letter about the conference theme, we were impressed by the following:—

"Maintenance is expensive—but vital. The Maintenance Manager must use every tool and technique at his disposal to improve the performance and increase the effectiveness of his department. Maintenance Management is a challenge—but can the computer help to meet it? Or would it just make matters more complex?"

"Maintenance Management can be computerised without problems, and this conference will take a cool look at the potential benefits—and the potential difficulties will also be discussed. Even if the idea proves practicable and cost effective, it still remains 'Computer Aided Maintenance' and not 'Computer Controlled Maintenance'."

Whatever the foregoing meant, it did not give a lead to answer the question posed—"What is Terotechnology?"

Enquiries were made in likely quarters but the terotechnological age had not yet dawned on those quarters. In desperation and yet not without good reason, we turned to a Government Department, Training Services Agency. Following much research and enquiry, this is the definition we received:—

"Terotechnology is defined as a combination of management, financial, engineering and other practices applied to physical assets in pursuit of economic life cycle costs." Well at last we know what Terotechnology is.

One question more—Will Maintenance Management by Computer or will Terotechnology cause Dai Jones at Cwm Pit to produce more coal, British Steel Corporation to stop losing £500,000,000 annually, help a few more East European countries to buy ships here to compete with us on the world's trade routes, Kerry Packer to organise a series of Tests on Hampstead Heath next year?, and so on.

Is it with us then, this Terotechnological Age?



"Little Jane" launching, Bristol City Docks, 31st July, 1977.

The Growth of "Little Jane"

THE YACHT *Little Jane* is an example of perseverance and dedication. She was built by Radio Officer E. G. Bromham and his father after four years of spare time work. She was built completely from scratch, ballast keel, spars, hand-spliced wire rigging and one of the three terylene sails. Initial trials have been satisfactory but she has yet to get any off-shore miles under her keel.

For those readers interested in the yacht's statistics, here they are:—

Keel set up—August 1973.

Launched—31st July, 1977.

LOA—22' 4", Beam 7' 0".

Draft—4' 0" Displacement 2,000 lb.

Ballast—1,000 lb.

Working Sail Area—200 sq. ft.

Hull Construction—Single Hard Chine;

Marine plywood on Oak frames;

Oak/Afromosia Longitudinals.

Ballast Keel—Ferro-Cement.

Spars—Spruce/Pine.

Sails—Terylene.

From Captain W. J. Cross m.v. "Amparo"

WHILST THE m.v. *Amparo* was bunkering recently at the Port of Manzanillo, Mexico, on the other side of the jetty was a Mexican naval destroyer the *Cuitlachuac* of 2,100 tons displacement, ex-U.S. navy, built in 1942, which in addition to taking on fuel was the centre of much activity. All morning stores of every description were being trundled down the narrow jetty, also, apart from foodstuffs, were items of household goods, fridges, mattresses, obviously more than normal type of stores required by the vessel.

It had been observed that a number of mainly women and children had been boarding, and milling around, adding to the chaos. On enquiring of one young

woman, we learned that she and all the other women and children were going to the island of Socorro, about 400 miles out in the Pacific, to join their husbands, who were carrying out research work on that barren spot, and further that they expected to be there 18 months.

Sweating sailors trundling all the bits and pieces aboard, complained that as far as they were concerned the whole operation was "No Buenos". Every space was packed with items, even the gun turrets being put into use. Amongst the live cargo were pets, even birds in cages, we noticed one young woman with a guitar. Finally, the last of the bundles and possessions were hurled on board, and off they set into a stiff w'yly breeze, seen off by various friends and a wave or two from the *Amparo*.

No sooner were the destroyer's bows pointed seaward than she commenced pitching heavily, which continued until she was out of sight.

The previous night before arrival at the Port of Manzanillo, on passage from Ensenada, we had been under the influence of a tropical depression, which had left a heavy w'yly swell which caused us some of the most unpleasant weather we had all voyage, and we wondered how the passengers aboard the destroyer (together with all their belongings, live and otherwise) were faring. About 9 p.m. that evening, whilst we were shifting to our discharging berth, we noticed a naval vessel come in and anchor in the harbour. As we passed, "Sparks", who is quite an expert on naval matters, assured us that it was our friend *Cuitlachuac*, who obviously had had enough of the weather, and returned for shelter.

Next morning the weather had improved, and once more they set sail, and as far as we know they finally made it. We wonder how they will like their new home for the next 1½ years—to judge by the pilot book (never one to look on the bright side, see under), unless they are hooked on beans and prickly pears, not much!

From the Admiralty pilot book "Pacific Coasts of Central America. Isla Socorro Lat. 19° 00' N. 112° 07' W."

The largest of the "Islas Revilla Gigedo" (which are under Mexican Sovereignty) is about 10 miles long and attains an elevation of 1,130 m (3,707 ft.).

Its surface is broken by hummocks and small craters and in some places it is furrowed by ravines, presenting a barren and uninviting appearance from seaward. Lava crops out in places, and walls the ravines.

The island is covered with a thick growth of sage and brush, extremely difficult to penetrate for the first mile, there is some grass, but the general vegetation is of a lower order, the red soil is plentifully mixed with ashes.

A bean which grows abundantly along the ground appears to be wholesome if cooked and eaten in moderation, prickly pears may also be had. There is an abundance of animal and bird life on the island, the shores of the island abound in fish, turtle, crabs and crawfish. (For how long?)

W. J. CROSS, Master

A poet, out meditating in the country, noticed a farmer looking at him curiously. "Ah," said the poet, "perhaps you, too, have seen the golden-red fingers of dawn speeding across the eastern sky, the red-stained sulfurous islets floating in a lake of wine in the West, the ragged clouds at midnight, blotting out the shuddering moon?"

"No," replied the farmer, "not lately. I've been on the wagon for more than a year."

THE MANLY MAN

The World has room for the manly man, with the spirit of manly cheer;

The world delights in the man who smiles when his eyes keep back the tear;

It loves the man who, when things are wrong, can take his place and stand

With his face to the fight and his eyes to the light, and toil with a willing hand;

The manly man is the country's need, the moment's need, forsooth,

With a heart that beats to the pulsing troop of the lilled leagues of truth;

The world is his and it waits for him, and it leaps to hear the ring

Of the blow he strikes and the wheels he turns and hammers he dares to swing;

It likes the forward look on his face, the poise of his noble head.

And the onward lung of his tireless will and the sweep of his dauntless tread!

Hurrah for the manly man who comes with sunlight on his face,

And the strength to do and the will to dare and the courage to find his place!

The world delights in the manly man, and weak and evil flee

When the manly man goes forth to hold his own on land or sea.

—Unknown

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

When sunset falls upon your day

And fades from out the West,

When business cares are put away

And you lie down to rest,

The measure of the day's success

Or failure may be told

In terms of human happiness

And not in terms of gold.

A Victorian Romance

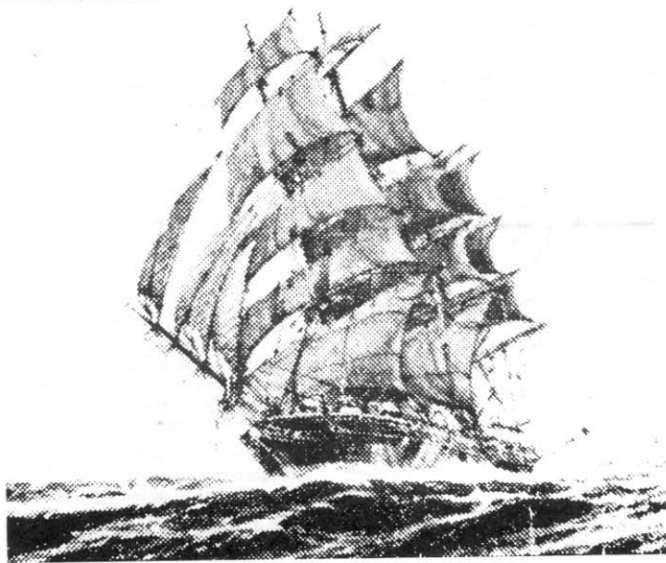
IN HIS ARTICLE on the National Museum of Wales in the August edition, Mr. John Crockett referred to the sailing ship *Torrens*. The mention of this ship has created great interest.

Captain Picton Davies had an interesting story to tell. It refers to a Victorian Romance in the year 1882. A secret wedding took place between an assistant gardener and the daughter of a shipmaster. The shipmaster was also of humble stock and had married a farmer's daughter. The family managed the farm whilst the captain was overseas on lengthy voyages.

The young assistant gardener took a sad farewell of his young wife (they were both 21) as he left home with half-a-crown in his pocket and made for Plymouth. There he "signed on" a sailing ship (shades of the "Onedin Line"). The vessel this time being none other than the *Torrens* (Captain Angel). Apparently he signed on as a catering rating of some kind. A story has been handed down that he suffered a severe reprimand from the Master for tossing the sheep brains overboard.

The *Torrens* traded to Adelaide and in South Australia with German immigrants, the young man learned his trade as a butcher. He returned home after three years to be reunited with his wife, the captain's daughter. He became a master butcher and the family business still remains in the family ownership today.

The young man of the *Torrens* and the captain's daughter were the parents of Mrs. Davies, Captain Picton Davies's wife.



"TORRENS"

A further article will appear on this interesting ship, which during her career was a close rival of the famous *Cutty Sark*.

One in the Eye for Daimler

SOME WEEKS AGO we drove to my daughter's boarding school near Bristol and took her and her friend Rachel, aged 9, out for the day.

Rachel's parents live in Saudi Arabia and she had not ridden in my car, a Toyota Celica, before.

The girls climbed into the back and we drove off down the M32 into Bristol. Suddenly from the rear seat Rachel's voice piped up "I like your car more than ours Mr. Cross. In the Daimler one's feet don't reach the floor!"

Perhaps the rich are not really comfortable after all.

We set out at the beginning of these series of articles to keep readers up to date with Reardon Smith Coggins subsidiary companies. Mr. J. H. Underwood has been most enthusiastic and has produced some interesting articles. This last one in the series is no less interesting.

Reardon Smith Coggins Group Company No. 5

Ferry Hill Warehouses Ltd. (Felixstowe Tobacco Bond)

THE MOST RECENT subsidiary to be formed by R.S.C. is Ferry Hill Warehouses Ltd. The name comes from the small hill upon which the warehouse building stands overlooking the Port of Felixstowe and Harwich Road, but the Company is generally known as the Felixstowe Tobacco Bond. The building is 750 ft. in length and 258 ft. in width and covers an area of almost 4 acres.

The Company commenced trading on 1st October, 1974, three years ago, and the warehouse was soon filled to its capacity of 55,000 cases of unmanufactured leaf tobacco (22,500 tons). The purpose of a warehouse of this kind is to provide storage for tobacco importers who need to hold large stocks in the U.K. and be assured of supplies for blending of the raw tobacco and its manufacture into cigarettes, cigars, or pipe tobacco. The warehouse which is "bonded" has to receive approval from H.M. Customs; and a small Customs staff is assigned to the warehouse to record the weight of all the tobacco imported, as it is upon the weight that import duty is assessed.

Warehouse Operations

There are three operations. The first is to receive the cases into the warehouse from containers or lorries; second to weigh the cases, and so assess the tobacco duty; third to select and deliver the cases required to the tobacco importer for manufacture at his factory. The first and last of these operations are simple. An average of 5 containers, with 90 cases per container, arrive each day; and a similar quantity of cases is despatched to the cigarette factories. This means that there are about 2,000 cases moving in and another 2,000 moving out each week, which is a turnover of 100,000 cases per annum. As the capacity of the warehouse is not much more than 50,000 cases it means that on average cases are remaining in the warehouse for about six months before they are sent to the tobacco factories. The stocks actually held at Ferry Hill at any one time probably represent something like 10% of the total tobacco leaf stock in the United Kingdom.

Weighing

Weighing is the operation that controls the flow and throughput of tobacco cases so fairly fast weighing is essential. All wooden cases and every tenth fibre case is "net" weighed—that is the outside case is removed and the block of tobacco leaf inside is weighed in its polythene "shirt". The other 9 cases out of every 10 which are not "net" weighed are "gross" weighed, i.e. weighed in the fibre case.

The reason for this is that wooden cases—mostly imports from underdeveloped countries—vary a great deal in weight and that means the contents must be weighed net without the case. Fibre cases on the other hand, being factory produced and probably packed mechanically, do not vary so much in weight—so H.M.C. are content to test weigh 1 fibre case out of every 10 fibre cases to check that the weight of the fibre is constant.

As a result gross weighing is a fast operation and 500 cases can be accurately weighed by 5 or 6 men in a day; on the other hand net weighing is slow because it involves de-nailing, and de-banding of cases, the lifting off of the case—and the replacing of the case after weighing, re-nailing, and re-banding. This requires 8 or 10 men, and throughput may vary from 100 to 150 cases per day, according to condition of the cases—but sometimes when cases are in very bad condition and have to be renewed altogether throughput is as low as 50 cases.



Cases of tobacco loaded on lorries for delivery to cigarette manufacturers.

Weighing is carried out in part of the building called the "Crown Lock Warehouse" where all tobacco is received upon arrival. Two parallel lines of gravity rollers 90 ft. in length are used to do this. One is for gross weighing, and one is for net weighing; and in between the lines of rollers along which the cases travel is a weighing office in which are seated a Custom's weighing officer and Ferry Hill's weighing clerk. The weighing scales are of the large platform type, and the platform of the scale forms part of the line—having a short length of roller on the platform—to carry the cases across. A correction for the weight of the roller fixed to the scale

platform is made automatically so that the true weight of the case only is recorded.

The line for "net" weighing is similar to the "gross" line, but has two "tipplers" in the line of rollers that can revolve the case 180° once the head of the case has been removed—so that when through the "tippler" a grab crane can lift the case off before the 400 lb. block of tobacco is weighed. Weighing completed, on goes the case again, and then the case (now with the tobacco back inside) rolls into another "tippler" which rotates it back 180° so that the case top may be re-nailed and re-banded. The "tipplers" and cranes are electrically operated and pneumatic banding tools for re-banding are used—but in spite of the use of all possible mechanical aids "net" weighing is laborious, and it is hard work at the best of times.



Cases of tobacco being stacked for storage after weighing.

Receiving and Delivery of Cases

All lifting of cases is by fork-lift trucks—but with the forks replaced by a "squeeze-clamp", which makes for easier and quicker working. There are 10 squeeze-clamp trucks at Ferry Hill, and these are used to unload containers or lorries upon arrival, to carry the cases to the weighing lines, and after weighing to the storage area. Tobacco is stored 7 cases high (20 ft.), and consignments are in stacks with working alleyways between stows. There are five warehouse bays for storage, and each has a capacity of 10,000 cases.

The squeeze-clamps are capable of lifting six or eight cases at a time, and to unload or load a 30 ton lorry is only 20 minutes work. When watching the skilled manner that the warehousemen have at Ferry Hill in manipulating their trucks and lifting the cases one is reminded of the old family grocer of

50 years ago who deftly patted the butter into a block with two small wooden bats whilst serving his customer—for the method of lifting by squeezing is the same.

Tobacco—facts and figures

The tobacco plant is now grown in almost every country in the world and large crops are grown in Canada and Korea—countries that have a short but hot summer—as well as in all the countries of Asia, Africa, and North and South America; and tobacco importers send their buyers year in year out scouring the world for supplies. Once cut and dried the leaf nowadays is packed into cases (4' 6" x 2' 6" x 2' 6") for shipment. Until a few years ago a hogshead, weighing up to 12 cwt., was the favoured mode of shipping tobacco—this was an awkward straight-sided cask that was easy to roll but difficult to handle with today's mechanical equipment.

Leaf tobacco on arrival in the U.K. is usually valued at between 50p and £1.00 a lb. weight according to quality—before tax. Not very expensive you may say—but even so that means the stock at Ferry Hill has a value of £22.5 million. Upon being manufactured into a consumable form (cigarette, cigar—or wad to smoke or chew!) the tobacco duty brings the price to the consumer up to around 75p per ounce. This is a fact of life that every pipe smoker knows—and a few taps on your calculator will quickly show that the stocks of tobacco at Ferry Hill when manufactured are worth £300 million. Hence the great interest that H.M. Customs take in the weighing operations that are performed in the warehouse.



View of weighing process in the "Crown Lock Warehouse".

The quality of tobacco leaf varies from the farm-produced high grade crops of Virginia to the rather poor grade crops that come from some Asian countries. The leaf is packed in "hands", i.e. small bundles of dried compressed tobacco; but stalks—"stems" and "strips" in the

(continued on page 6)

Ferry Hill Warehouses Ltd. continued)

trade—are packed separately. With over 10,000 tons of tobacco at Ferry Hill the aroma of tobacco within the building is pleasant to most people who visit the warehouse (but there are those of course, who prefer the smells of breweries and distilleries!). Amongst the stocks, however, are some 300 tons of tobacco substitute, or synthetic tobacco which is completely odourless and tasteless—but very good for your health they say.

Tobacco storage, too, has its hazards. It mustn't get wet, and it mustn't be verminous. Occasionally a consignment of tobacco does arrive infested with the tobacco beetle (a hairy-legged little fellow that likes squatting in tobacco) and before he can spread and contaminate other consignments already in the warehouse, fumigation or gassing of the entire building may become necessary.

The Staff, and the Future

"Ah! Don't forget the workers" you cry! Certainly not.

The staff at Ferry Hill number 20 "persons"—notice no sex discrimination!

The future for tobacco warehousing is about to change. Firstly, on 1st January, 1978 the U.K. falls into line with E.E.C. Customs procedures, and tobacco weighing as Ferry Hill has known it will be almost eliminated. Secondly, H.M. Government's campaign to reduce tobacco consumption for health reasons goes relentlessly on, and may in a generation or so greatly reduce the habit first introduced to Britain 400 years ago by Sir Walter Raleigh.

Fortunately for Ferry Hill English-made cigarettes have the same sort of world-wide reputation that Scotch whisky has, and are much preferred to those manufactured in some other countries. (For example—just what do the Egyptians put in their cigarettes?) The chances are, therefore, that although the home market for cigarettes may decline, the overseas markets—where Governments do not promote anti-smoking campaigns—are likely to grow. At least that is what the staff of Ferry Hill hope and believe—so they keep smiling and smoking.

FROM the It's-All-Very-Simple department of the Inland Revenue: "For employees with non-cumulative codes, the effect of the proposed increases in personal allowances is that the under-deduction from the start of the year to the date that reduced non-cumulative code was first used will be offset by the over-deduction for the period before the increased non-cumulative code is first used." Geddit?

m.v. "Prince Rupert City" at Coos Bay, July 1977

APART FROM the report received on the football match at Coos Bay (see September edition) we have received an interesting report from Mr. Alec Whalen, Manager, Agency Department, Jones Oregon Stevedoring Co., Mr. Whalen is also connected with the Bay area Soccer Club.

A very enjoyable time was had by all whilst the vessel was at Coos Bay.

In addition to the successful soccer match the team was entertained at the home of a member of the Coos Bay team. Captain Keith Whitting was also present.

On the Sunday, 31st July, a picnic was held for the vessel's Officers on Coos River some forty-miles from Coos Bay.

Mr. Whalen writes—"The Captain of the *Prince Rupert City* was a perfect host to the local team, also his Officers. In fact the word Ambassadors should be used, they not only represented the vessel but also Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons Ltd."



Officers relax away from vessel—Coos River.

HAVING READ many articles in the *Newsletter* of wondrous foreign parts submitted by the suave, sophisticated members of the sea-going staff I thought a tale on the other side of the coin would be appropriate, i.e. the writer's only sea trips Harwich to the Hook on an Army Troopship. On departing from home at the tender age of 18 and having been born and brought up in a pub I was not warned by my mother against wicked women and sent on my way with a bag of rock cakes, I was given half-a-bottle of brandy and warned against drinking "Foreign Booze".

This bottle fitted neatly into the right hand pouch, ammunition for the use of, and balanced the cheese rolls in the left pack. My parents' instructions were on boarding the vessel to lie down on my bunk and sip the brandy and I was assured I would be quite incapable of being sea sick. Incapable was the word! I could not have left the bunk if I wanted to. Having slept through the November night I awoke bright eyed and bushy tailed to find in the

dim red emergency lights a sea of green unshaven faces of my comrades. I was assured I had slept through a "gale force 108" and that this adjectival troopship not only dipped from the front to the back but also swayed from side to side "both at the same time", also that most of the life rafts had been smashed or carried away. Bearing in mind a thoughtful friend had lashed me into my bunk, if the ship had sunk I would have met a watery grave with a smile on my face.

The moral of this story is that by the time we boarded the troop train and breakfasted on army armour-plated cheese rolls my comrades had recovered but I was violently ill, caused without doubt by the cheese!

T. ROSSER

CONTRIBUTION

THE SUM OF £21.00 from the officers of m.v. *Gela* was forwarded to Royal Merchant Navy School—November 1977.

SHIPS POSITIONS AT 23rd NOVEMBER 1977

Cardiff City. On Time Charter a/c Salen. Sailed Alexandria 20th November towards Gibraltar for orders.

Devon City. On Time Charter a/c Motortank. Arrived Algiers 13th September to discharge grain cargo. Prospects complete early December. Next business not yet fixed.

Eastern City. On Time Charter a/c Showa. Arrived Gladstone 17th November to load cargo coal for Japan. Sails 24th November, arriving Fukuyama 6th December to discharge, completes 8th December and redelivers from Time Charter.

Fresno City. Arrived Long Beach 22nd November to commence steel discharge. Sails 23rd for Portland where continues discharge 26/27th, completing New Westminster 28/30th November. Vessel then delivers under Time Charter a/c Seaboard loading B.C. 1st/8th December. Transits Panama Canal 20th December arriving London to commence discharge 3rd January. Sails 6th for Antwerp arriving 7th. Sails Antwerp 9th, arriving Cardiff 11th January to complete discharge. Completes 13th January and redelivers from Time Charter.

New Westminster City. On Time Charter a/c Alianca. Sailed Mobile 18th November with cargo buses and spares. Arrives Alexandria 4th December to discharge, completing 20th. Vessel then drydocks in the Mediterranean area before resuming Time Charter operations.

Orient City. Arrived Chinwangtao 14th November to discharge grain cargo. Expect complete end November. Next business not yet fixed.

Port Alberni City. On Time Charter a/c A. P. Moller. Arrived Basrah 14th November to discharge lumber cargo. Berthing and discharge prospects uncertain, but hopefully completes 5th December. Redelivers from Time Charter passing Muscat 7th December and proceeds Bombay to change crew, arriving 12th December.

Prince Rupert City. Arrived New Westminster 21st November to complete steel discharge. On completion commences loading under B.C.—U.K. Cont. Berth Service, loading New Westminster 23rd November, Nanaimo 26/27th, Eureka 29th/2nd December, Coos Bay 3rd/5th, Crofton 7/8th and Vancouver 9/14th December. Transits Panama Canal 26th December. Arrives London 10th January to commence discharge. Sails 16th for Brake, arriving 17/18th, Rotterdam 19th/21st, completing Zeebrugge 22nd/23rd January. On completion discharge drydocks for 7 days.

Tacoma City. On B.C.—U.K. Cont. Berth Service. Sailed Vancouver 7th November with cargo Forest Products. Transited Suez Canal 20th November. Arrives Dublin 4th December to commence discharge. Sails 9th for London to continue discharge 11/16th December, followed by Brake 17/19th and Rotterdam 20th/22nd December.

Vancouver City. On Time Charter a/c B.H.P. Sailed Westernport 16th November with steel cargo. Discharges part cargo Colombo 29th November—8th December. Transits Suez Canal 18th December, arriving Ravenna 22nd December. Completes discharge 1st January and redelivers from Time Charter passing Cape Passero 3rd January.

Victoria City. Arrived London 17th November to commence discharge Forest Products. Sails 28th November and continues discharging Brake 29th/2nd December and Rotterdam 3rd/5th December. Vessel then proceeds to Antwerp to load steel 5/9th December and Middlesbrough 10/20th December. Transits Panama Canal 3rd January and discharges Long Beach 12/14th January, Oakland 15/17th, Portland 19/20th, completing New Westminster 21st/22nd January. Vessel then loads under B.C.—U.K. Cont. Berth Service 22nd through 6th February. Transits Panama Canal 18th February arriving U.K. Cont. to discharge 4th March until about 18th.

Welsh City. Sailed Flushing in ballast 11th November to load grain cargo at Drestrehan, where arrives 25th November. Sails 1st December for undisclosed discharge port, arriving around 16th December, completing 20th December—30th January.

Amparo. Arrived Nagoya 22nd November and is expected to sail 23rd for Yokkaichi arriving 24th and sailing 25th for Kobe 26/28th, optional ports Keelung/Hong Kong 1st/4th December, Kanda 7/8th, Kobe 9/11th, Nagoya 12/13th, Yokohama 14/16th, Nagasaki 18/20th, Ensenada 31st/4th January, Manzanillo 7/10th, Acapulco 11/14th, Puntarenas 17/19th, Corinto 20th/22nd, Cutuco/Acajutla 23rd/25th, Champerico/San Jose 26/27th, Manzanillo 31st/1st February, Mazatlan/Guaymas 3rd/4th and Ensenada 7/8th February.

Atlantic. On Time Charter a/c Yulsan. Arrived Busan 9th November. Expected to take 30 days loading and is expected to sail about 30th December with a cargo of cement for discharge Jeddah via Singapore for bunkers, arriving 8th January and sailing 9th, arriving Jeddah to discharge 25th January.

Elena. Sailed San Jose 21st November for Champerico where arrived 21st and is expected to sail 22nd for Manzanillo, arriving 24th and sailing 25th for Mazatlan 26/27th, San Carlos 28th/1st December, Ensenada 2nd/4th, Yokohama 20th/21st, Nagoya/Yokkaichi 22nd/24th, Osaka/Kobe 25/27th, Keelung 30th/1st January, Hong Kong 2nd/4th, Kobe 7/9th, Nagoya 10/11th, Yokohama 12/14th, Ensenada 28/29th, Manzanillo 1st/3rd February, Acapulco 4/7th, Puntarenas 10/12th and Corinto 13/15th February.

Gela. Sailed Houston 17th November with a total cargo of 1,773 T including 122 drums chemicals on deck for discharge Hamburg where arrives 4th December and sails 6th for Bremen

7/8th, Rotterdam 9/9th, Copenhagen 12/13th, Gothenburg 15/16th, Antwerp 19/20th, Le Havre 21st/23rd, Liverpool 26/28th, Vera Cruz 13/15th January, Tampico 16/17th, Coatzacoalcas 18/19th, Progreso 20th/21st, Porto Cortes 23rd/24th, Baton Rouge 27/28th, New Orleans 29/30th, San Domingo 4/6th February and Tenerife 14/15th February.

Maria Elisa. Arrived Porto Cortes 18th November and is expected to sail 22nd for Coatzacoalcas, arriving 24th and sailing 25th for Tampico 26/27th, Port Arthur 28/29th, New Orleans 30th/1st December, Mobile 2nd/3rd, San Domingo 8/9th, Tenerife 18/19th, Las Palmas 19/20th, Barcelona 24/25th, Naples 27/28th, Leghorn 29/30th, Genoa 1st/2nd January, Marseilles 3rd/4th, Valencia 5/6th, Vera Cruz 22nd/25th and Tampico 26/27th January.

Sara Lupe. Sailed Las Palmas 19th November for Alicante arriving 23rd and sailing on the same day for Leghorn arriving 26th and sailing 27th for Genoa 28/30th, Marseilles 1st/2nd December, Barcelona 3/3rd, Vera Cruz 19th/21st, Tampico 22nd/23rd, Coatzacoalcas 24/25th, Progreso 26/27th, Porto Cortes 29th/31st, Baton Rouge 4/5th January, New Orleans 6/7th, San Domingo 12/13th, Tenerife 23rd/24th, Las Palmas 24/25th, Valencia 29/30th, Naples 2nd/3rd February and Leghorn 4/6th February.

Life

Man comes into this world without his consent and leaves it against his will.

On earth he is misjudged and misunderstood.

In infancy he is an angel, in boyhood a little devil, in manhood he is a fool.

If he has a wife and family he is a chump. If a bachelor he is inhuman.

If he enters a public house he is a drunkard.

If he stops out, he is a miser.

If he is a poor man he has no brains.

If he is rich he has all the luck in the world.

If he has brains he is considered smart, but dishonest.

If he goes to church he is a hypocrite.

If he stays away he is a sinful man.

If he gives to charity it is for advertisement.

If he does not, he is stingy and mean.

When he comes into the world everybody wants to kiss him, when he goes out everybody wants to kick him.

If he dies young, there was a great future before him.

If he lives to a ripe old age everybody hopes he has made a will and asks as to how much money did he leave.

