



SHIPMATES

Reardon Smith Seafarer's Newsletter

Issue No.12 September 1999.



In 1885 William Reardon Smith the founder of the Reardon Smith Line supervised the building of the Hogarth's ship "The Ochtertyre" and when completed took command of the vessel and sailed with her for several years. He had a part share in the vessel and this was his first venture in ship owning. 70 years later in 1955 the company Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons, Ltd., held their Jubilee Celebration at the St.Mellons County Club, St.Mellons (Monmouthshire), on Friday 11th November 1955. Above is a photograph of then the Chairman Mr. Douglas Smith (one of Sir William's sons), with his wife cutting the Jubilee Cake with an icing sugar miniature model "The Ochtertyre" mounted on top of the cake.

This Newsletter is dedicated to the ships called the "Leeds City".

S.S."Leeds City"(1) 1908-1918 built at Ropner & Sons, Stockton, sunk by a submarine.

S.S."Leeds City"(2) 1918- 1927 Reardon Smith bought this ship when it was one year old and she sank on a reef in the Java Sea 1927.

S.S."Leeds City"(3) This was a lucky ship. What adventures her log book relate. Built by William Grey & Co.,Ltd., launched in the summer of 1927. Six years of war she played her part an integral cog in a great machine. Without serious mishap from the start, trading all over the world at a speed between 9 and 10 knots, serene, unhurried slowly steaming along. Sold in 1951 to a Japanese Shipping Company and re-named "Terushima Maru", the following year she ran aground in the River Hoogly, broke in two and became a total loss.

1941- the "Leeds City" Master Blake Carnaffan, 2nd Officer Dai Beyan, Chief Engineer Wardropper, and Chief Steward John Lindsay (Oliver Lindsay's father), were some of the officers onboard, on charter to the Ministry of War Transport sailed from Newport, Monmouth, with a cargo of military equipment for Suez via the Cape of Good Hope and Aden. Whilst sailing in convoy, due to mechanical problems she was forced to drop out of the convoy to effect repairs. Some days later the convoy was attacked by enemy submarines who over several days pressed their action and a number of vessels were lost. Meanwhile the "Leeds City" having completed repairs proceeded independently, apparently, so delayed that she was assumed lost. However, she eventually reached Aden bunkered and then proceeded to Suez where she delivered her much need war cargo.

1943- While in a westbound convoy off the North African Coast she was attacked by enemy aircraft carrying radio controlled flying bombs. Although the enemy pressed home the attack and in the action the vessel was machined gunned and several bombs exploded close alongside no serious damage was sustained and she reached the U.K. safely where repairs were effected.

The "Leeds City"(3) was a coal burning ship and many firemen were carried to stoke the boilers and the stokehole was a work house with coal being shovelled into the furnaces by the ton. The clinker and ash being sliced up with a long slice and being raked out of the furnaces with long rakes. The ash being carried to the ash hoist, a bucket lift operated by the vacuum from the main condenser that lifted the ash bucket to the weather deck level and discharged over the side through a chute. The dust and dirt blowing all over the ship if the wind was in the wrong direction. The tough time came when the company decided to burn coal outward bound and burn fuel oil back. The boilers were fired by coal out, i.e. to Aden. While proceeding down the Red Sea a boiler would be shut down and the Engineers would go into the hot furnaces with the boiler under steam, covered with sacking that was saturated with water to keep then cool. They removed all the fire bars and associated equipment, and then assembled the oil burning equipment to the boiler front in readiness for burning fuel oil.

M.V."Leeds City"(3). Was built at William Doxford & Sons, Pallion, Sunderland, (Ship No.807), June 1955 the RSL Jubilee Year. She went on trials on the 1st June and did a mean speed of 15.23 knots the engine producing 4,545 brake horsepower at 107.5 R.P.M. The cylinders were 700 m.m. bore. Around the 1954/55 John Lamb O.B.E head of Research for Anglo-Saxon Petroleum was pressurizing the marine engine builders to make engines to burn heavy fuel oil i.e. 1500 second Redwood No.1 (180 IFO). To catch up with this Doxford Engines made several modifications to their LB engines.

The "Leeds City"(3) was fitted with the first modified engine (No.807). The modifications were :-

1. A piston rod was fitted to the lower piston with a diaphragm gland housed in a chamber, this eliminated the lower piston skirt and prevented combustion products from entering the crankcase.
2. A new timed fuel injection system was introduced the fuel pumps discharged fuel to a common rail as previous to a timing valve operated by a cam on the camshaft, this opened at the correct time, to allowed fuel to pass to two C.A.V. fuel valves one front and one at the back of the engine cylinder.
3. The air starting system was changed where the control air to start the engine went to a distributor with 4 ports (4 cylinder engine). A shuttle revolving in the distributor was channelled out to distribute control air to its corresponding air start valve at the cylinder, this then opened and allowed the main air supply from the main air bottles to start the engine in either ahead or astern direction as required.

Leeds City" (3) continued on page No. 5.

Memories :- Many **Shipmates** will remember the lovely style letter headed paper used by the company with the embossed Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons, Ltd., on the envelope which used to pop in the letterbox with your sailing orders, or better still the pay cheque. To refresh your memory we have dug into the archives and found the letter heads from the following Cardiff offices :-

- | | | | |
|---|-------|--|--------------|
| 1 | | Merther House, James Street, Cardiff. | 1919 to 1946 |
| 2 | | 70, Bute Street, Cardiff. | 1946 to 1947 |
| 3 | | Colum Buildings, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff. | 1947 to 1958 |
| 4 | | Devonshire House, Greyfriars Road, Cardiff. | 1958 to 1966 |
| 5 | | Devonshire House, Greyfriars Road, Cardiff. | 1966 to 1985 |

1

SIR WILLIAM REARDON SMITH & SONS,
LIMITED.

TELEGRAMS: SMITHCRAFT, CARDIFF.
TELEPHONES: 5116 (4 LINES)

DIRECTORS
SIR W. REARDON SMITH, BT. DOUGLAS SMITH.
A. J. POPHAM, W. G. LILEY, D. A. LOW,
W. R. REARDON SMITH.

DS.

MERTHYR HOUSE
JAMES STREET
CARDIFF.

AND AT CREECHURCH HOUSE, LONDON, E.C.3.

11th November, 1942.

2

SIR WILLIAM REARDON SMITH
& SONS LIMITED

TELEGRAMS: SMITHCRAFT, CARDIFF.
TELEPHONE: 5116 (4 LINES)

RII:

DIRECTORS
SIR W. REARDON SMITH, BT. DOUGLAS SMITH.
A. J. POPHAM, W. G. LILEY, D. A. LOW,
W. R. REARDON SMITH, A. J. REARDON SMITH.

70, BUTE STREET,
CARDIFF.

AND AT CREECHURCH HOUSE, LONDON, E.C.3.

2nd June 1947.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE FIRM AND NOT TO INDIVIDUALS

3

SIR WILLIAM REARDON SMITH & SONS,
LIMITED.

TELEGRAMS: SMITHCRAFT, CARDIFF.
TELEPHONES: 28077.

DIRECTORS
DOUGLAS SMITH (CHAIRMAN)
A. J. REARDON SMITH (VICE-CHAIRMAN)

C. J. BASS H. A. E. CABWELL H. H. DYER
S. R. RANDALL D. STUART F. E. WARD
 T. K. WATSON

COLUM BUILDINGS,
MOUNT STUART SQUARE,
CARDIFF.

AND AT 58/59 FENCHURCH STREET, LONDON, E.C.3.

Yours.....

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE FIRM AND NOT TO INDIVIDUALS

4

SIR WILLIAM REARDON SMITH & SONS,
LIMITED.

TELEGRAMS: SMITHCRAFT, CARDIFF
TELEPHONE: 28077. TELEX: 49242

DIRECTORS
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ALAN J. REARDON SMITH (VICE-CHAIRMAN)
ANTHONY REARDON SMITH

C. J. BASS H. A. E. CABWELL S. R. RANDALL
 H. F. ROLFE T. K. WATSON

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE,
GREYFRIARS ROAD,
CARDIFF.

AND AT 58/59 FENCHURCH STREET, LONDON, E.C.3.

Yours.....

5



ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE FIRM AND NOT TO INDIVIDUALS

Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons Limited

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, GREYFRIARS ROAD, CARDIFF

AND AT
58-59 FENCHURCH STREET
LONDON E.C.3.

TELEGRAMS SMITHCRAFT, CARDIFF
TELEPHONE 28077, AFTER HOURS 28103
TELEX 49242

MY FIRST TRIP TO SEA

After spending three, seemingly never ending years at college as an Engineer cadet, the time had come, at last, to join my first ship.

It was August 8th 1970 and the ship which was to be my home for the next 6 months was MV "CHIYODA" (ex "EASTERN CITY", built in 1965).

The journey to join the ship was to prove to be an adventure in its own right. Having left Heathrow on the Saturday evening we overnighted in Rotterdam prior to taking a KLM cargo/charter plane bound eventually for Bangkok via Damascus and other exotic sounding places. Upon reaching Bangkok, the day was spent in a hotel prior to joining a scheduled flight bound for Tokyo. We should have flown from here to Fukuoka and then on to Moji. However, no flights were available so the whole journey was undertaken in a bus, which actually took HOURS! After another night in a hotel in Moji we eventually got on board on the Wednesday morning -- 4 days of travelling.

The officers of the CHIYODA at this time were:

Captain A B Parkhouse
Mate P. Boroughs
Second Mate. Evan Walmsley
Third Mate. Mike Gaffney

Chief Engineer
Second Engineer. R.K.Binns
Third Engineer. Les
Fourth Engineer. Olly Williams
Junior Engineer. Mike Snook
Eng. Cadet. Terry Davies
Eng. Cadet. Stuart Fraser

Life, obviously was so different - at times exciting and at times monotonous - but what an experience and to quote a phrase of today - a steep learning curve. Of course the 3 years in college were important, in their own way, but it was from now on that the learning really did begin.

Upon sailing from Moji, 2 weeks later, we had a brief stop in Nagoya to load 2000 odd cars and then made off for Rotterdam via Panama. I was placed on the 8-12 with Olly Williams who turned out to be a fantastic teacher from whom I learnt so much --- engineering as well as life itself!! I met up with Olly again in 1990 in Holyhead when I was a Superintendent for Sealink and he was running a garage and he hadn't changed a bit.!

The 6 months were spent trading as follows:-

Moji to Nagoya	Lightship
Yokohama/Nagoya to Rotterdam	Cars and vans
Rotterdam to Mobile, Alabama	Lightship
Mobile to Kimitsu Japan	Coal
Hiroshima to Antwerp	Cars and vans

The usual problems were experienced throughout the 6 months and the ship did not spend much time in port due to the types of cargoes carried. This meant that pistons etc. were having to be pulled at sea due to breakdown situations.

However, on the final crossing of the Pacific from Hiroshima what turned out to be a serious problem occurred.

The main engine (Sulzer RD76) started suffering fuel injector and fuel pump valve problems. It got to the state when we were having to stop nearly every 6 hours to change something or other in the fuel system. The valves and seats were being "eaten away" and the needles in the nozzles were also suffering the same fate. Heads were being scratched but everything pointed to fuel contamination from an acidic source – but from where?

A clue was provided when the fuel oil purifier also failed and upon opening up, the hood was found to be solid CEMENT.

It transpires that a hole had been found in a sounding pipe or air pipe to a fuel tank within a hold and the Mate had arranged to put a cement box around the offending hole to prevent oil contaminating the cargo!! Say no more?

Obviously, that particular fuel was not used from then on, but the main problem now was that we were running out of spares. Les (3/E) worked night and day reconditioning what we had but the condition of the stock got to a desperate level. The Chief had telexed for spares to be flown to Panama to meet us on arrival. When we eventually reached Panama the spares were brought aboard. But the tale doesn't end there.—Spares for an RD 90 had been dispatched???

We were really lucky as no more failures occurred whilst crossing the Atlantic and Antwerp was made in one piece.

What a challenging first 6 months of my seagoing career

Ferry Davies

"Leeds City" continued from page No.2.

Commodore Lindsey gives details of one of the voyages he did on the "Leeds City" (4).

Voyage No. 22. Sailed Antwerp 20th November 1966. Arrived Antwerp 1967. Compliment:-
 Master O.J.T. Lindsay Ch.Off. B.A.G. Boyer Ch. Engr. T.L. Griffiths 2nd.Engr. R.U. Bell
 2nd. Off. T. Lawson 3rd. Off. D.J.A.Nicoll 3rd. Engr. B.V. Jones 4th Engr. J.A.Walls
 Radio Off. D.T.Williams Ch.Steward W.Wigman Electrician C.H.Turner Junr.Engr. D. Senior
 Apprentices:- S. Banish R.A.L.Russel R.E.Addis Jnr.Engr.W.J.Mncreath Jnr.Eng. C.B. Kibble
 and forty Indian Ratings.

Vessel was delivered on Time Charter, Account Pakistan Shipping, at Bremen on the 22nd November 1966 - to load general cargo for Karachi and Chittagong only. Redelivery to Owners took place at Chittagong on the 26th February 1967 and sail immediately afterwards for Calcutta.

On arrival Calcutta 28th February vessel was delivered on Time Charter to Nedlloyd for their liner service, Indian and Far East ports for West Coast Mexico and West Coast South America, Service.

Loading:- Calcutta, Chalna, Penang, Port Swettenham, Hong Kong, Kobe and Yokohama.

Discharging:- Acapulco, Callao, Materani, Arica, Valparaiso, Tocopilla, Puerto Chisama, Pacasmayo, Pimintel and Guayaquil.

On completion of discharge at Guayaquil vessel was re-delivered to Owners 27th May and sailed for Vera Cruz, Mexico. Arrived Vera Cruz 4th June to load a full cargo maize for Antwerp. Commenced loading 6th June. Completed 20th June and sailed. Arrived Antwerp 10th July 1967.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR FROM Capt. TONY CROWTHER.

The RSL Connection.

About eighteen months ago I decided to change my working life and get back into the marine consultancy field which I first entered after leaving RSL as Cargo Superintendent. Five years ago after our children had grown and flown from the nest we moved to a small island in British Columbia and for three years I was commuting between there and Vancouver. So I closed my downtown Vancouver office and started working from home. I had kept in touch with my old work shipmates, one of whom was Peter Bloomfield who had married and settled in Houston U.S.A.. He and his wife Cindy have two great kids, Ken and PJ. Peter asked if I was able to assist the company he was working with and basically that's what I have been doing since, mostly in Mexico and the Caribbean. I now go away for about a month working then take a month or so off. When I first saw "Bloomers" again, it was for the first time for 27 years, but I would had known him anywhere - he still looks the apprentice he was on the maiden voyage of the Doxford built "Cardiff City" in 1962 when I was Third Mate - perhaps a little older.

A recent job had me arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia. What was I doing in Halifax ?. The Sable Island Offshore gas project is underway - Beautiful Sable Island is 200 hundred kilometres offshore from Halifax and is a 42 kilometres stretch of surf-lashed sand, a wrecking ground for ships of old and a current playground for about 300 wild horses unique to the area. Six proven gas fields surround the island which lie amidst one of the largest untapped natural gas deposits in North America, and estimated at 18 trillion cubic feet of potential gas resources. 2 billion dollars is being sunk into the first phase project and it is by far the biggest ever industrial undertaking in Nova Scotia. A number of drilling companies were chasing the initial business but the two who succeeded were Rowan Drilling and Santa Fe Drilling. The Rowan rig arrived some time ago but the Santa Fe rig only arrived in Halifax in October 1998 - it is called "Galaxy 2" and is one of the worlds jack up rigs. It is purpose built in Singapore and transported the 9700 nautical miles to Halifax around South Africa on the Russian submersible vessel "Transshelf". It cost 200 million U.S. dollars to build and will earn about 140,000 per day for its initial contract at Sable. If you like oil rigs then this one is magnificent brand new - a crew of about 100 - a length of 240 feet and a beam of 250 feet - yes - that's right - its legs are 560 feet long! Santa is a Dallas based company with offices in Aberdeen, etc.. it is 100% owned by Kuwait Oil Company . As a Warranty Surveyor I am here to represent Santa Fe and have been involved with approving all steps from floating off the "Transshelf" - cowing to the field - putting on location using all sorts of sophisticated GFS stuff. There is a maximum of 0.75 meter allowed off the position! pretty fancy stuff when you consider offshore early November! - once the rig is jacked up to its drilling position the rig is handed over to Sable Energy and that's where I get off. It was a 1½ hour trip back in a 20 person Sikorsky 61 helicopter - one of the best around. That's another story! - to be allowed to fly offshore Canada I had to take a Survival Course which was pretty arduous . The easy part was offshore Halifax in a survival suit - abandoning after chucking over the life raft - swimming and getting into the inflated raft then getting out again and swimming to the rescue vessel! The hardest part was the session in the college where they have a mock full size helicopter which is ditched into the pool with us in it (remember to hold your breath) then roll 180 degrees underwater. At that time you bump out the window - release your seat belt (good idea not to forget that) and pull yourself out of the window and swim to the surface again wearing a survival suit and lifejacket on top! We had to do it four times - the last time was definitely the best time! It was a good experience not to be missed.

The reason I mention this particular job is that the rigs OIM (Offshore Installation Manager) is a fine looking gentleman in he's early 40's called Doug Cunning. Doug served his time in Reardon Smith Line and continued as a navigating officer with the company until leaving to join Santa Fe Drilling Company. We had a good time "chewing the fat " over a period of about a week - amongst many persons he sailed with Captain John Cann and Captain Lindsay.

He would be delighted to hear from his old shipmates and can be reached at :-

336A High Street, Leslie, Fife. KY6 3AT.

Peter Bloomfield lives at :- 7618 Willowmint Lane, Houston, Texas 77086.

Best Regards Tony Crowther. B.C. Canada.

1/13/1999.

Don't Panic - Write a Report

The following report from a ship's Master is reproduced by kind permission of the anonymous author who appears to be gifted with remarkable sang-froid!!! I am unaware of the source of this report honestly!!!

"It is with regret and haste that I write this letter to you. Regret that such a small misunderstanding could lead to the following circumstances, and haste in order that you will get this report before you form your own pre-conceived opinions from reports in the world press, for I am sure that they will tend to over dramatise the affair.

We had just picked up the Pilot and the Apprentice had returned from changing the G flag for the H and, it being his first trip, was having difficulty in rolling the G flag up. I therefore proceeded to show him how. Coming to the last part, I told him to "let go". The lad, although willing, is not too bright, necessitating my having to repeat the order in a sharper tone.

At this moment the Chief Officer appeared from the Chartroom, having been plotting the vessel's progress and, thinking that it was the anchors that were being referred to, he repeated the "let go" to the Third Officer on the fo'c'stle. The port anchor, having been cleared away but not walked out, was promptly let go. The effect of letting the anchor drop from the pipe while the vessel was proceeding at full harbour speed proved too much for the windlass brake, and the entire length of the port cable was pulled out by the roots. I fear that the damage to the chain locker may be extensive. The braking effect of the port anchor naturally caused the vessel to sheer in that direction, towards the swing bridge that spans a tributary to the river up which we were proceeding.

The swing bridge operator showed great presence of mind by opening the bridge for my vessel. Unfortunately, he did not think to stop the vehicular traffic, the result being that the bridge partly opened and deposited a Volkswagen, two cyclists and a cattle truck on the foredeck. My ship's company are at present rounding up the contents of the latter, which from the noise, I would say were pigs. In his efforts to stop the progress of the vessel, the Third Officer dropped the starboard anchor, too late to be of practical use, for it fell on the swing bridge operators control cabin.

After the port anchor was let go and the vessel started to sheer, I gave a double ring Full Astern on the engineroom telegraph and personally rang the engine room to order maximum astern revolutions. I was informed that the sea temperature was 53° and asked if there was a film tonight; my reply would not add constructively to this report.

Up to now I have confined my report to the activities at the forward end of the vessel. Down aft they were having their own problems. At the moment the port anchor was let go, the Second Officer was supervising the making fast of the after tug and was lowering the towing spring down into the tug. The sudden braking

effect of the port anchor caused the tug to run in under the stern of my vessel, just at the moment when the propeller was answering my double ring full astern. The prompt action of the Second Officer in securing the inboard end of the towing spring undoubtedly delayed the sinking of the tug by some minutes, thereby allowing the safe abandoning of that vessel.

It is strange, but at the very same moment of letting go the port anchor, there was a power cut ashore. The fact that we were passing over a cable area at that time might suggest that we may have touched something on the river bed. It is perhaps lucky that the high tension cables brought down by the foremast were not live, possibly being replaced by the underwater cable, but owing to the shore blackout, it is impossible to say where the pylon fell.

It never fails to amaze me, the actions and behaviour of foreigners during moments of minor crises. The Pilot for instance, is at this moment huddled in the corner of my dayroom, alternately crooning to himself and crying after having consumed a bottle of gin in a time that is worthy of inclusion in the Guinness Book of Records. The Tug Master on the other hand, reacted violently and had to be forcibly restrained by the Chief Steward who has him handcuffed in the ship's hospital, where he is telling me to do impossible things with my ship and my crew.

I enclose the names and addresses of the drivers and insurance companies of the vehicles on my foredeck, which the Third Officer collected after his somewhat hurried evacuation of the Fo'c'stle. These particulars will enable you to claim for the damage they did to the railings at the port side of No.1 hatch.

I am forwarding this preliminary report, for I am finding it difficult to concentrate with the sound of Police sirens and their flashing lights.

It is sad to think that had the Apprentice realised that there is no need to fly pilot flags after dark, none of this would have happened."

Yours truly,
Master.

No doubt you can all put names to the characters in this report!!

Al Nicholl

Coincidence:- Early in the year I was speaking to Capt. John Cann and he mentioned that previously some stories sent to "Shipmates" had not been published, he went on to say that an article sent in from Alan Nicholl about two years ago must have been lost. I wrote to Alan in May 1999 who kindly typed and sent on the above story. Strangely enough on the 26th June 1999 I had a letter from our member Cyril Hudson of Sarnia, Canada, who also sent in the identical story. What a coincidence. This story must be around the world. We thank both Alan and Cyril for this story and their time for writing to "Shipmates".
We are getting desperate for short stories please help.

Another coincidence:- Having a chat with Shipmate Malcom Rayner in June this year he told me that him and his wife Mary had been on a cruise in the Caribbean. While they were walking along the deck he spotted this lady which he knew. He tapped her on the shoulder, it was Mrs. Davies, wife of our member Terry Davies who were both sailing on the same cruise, so it was a foursome all voyage. Come on Terry we are waiting for a report on this cruise..

Obituary:- Captain Kenneth Lee

Aged 74 years, crossed the bar, peacefully at his home in Barry on the 29th May 1999.

Kenneth was born at St Mellons, Gwent June 28th 1924, the family moving to Cardiff and finally Barry. He attended the Barry Grammar School, in 1939 with his mind set on a seagoing career, he passed the entrance examination for the Smith Junior Nautical School, commencing at the beginning of the 2nd year of a 3 year course. On completing the course in July 1941, he received the Kings Silver Medal, one of three presented annually by the Honourable Company of Master Mariners to best students in Nautical Schools.

Kenneth signed Apprentice's Indenture with Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons Ltd on the 17th September 1941 and joined the **S.S. Madras City** at Middlesbrough, a ship he served on until 21st April 1943. A month and then joined the **Empire Cheer** (later to become ("**Cornish City**") a ship he was to serve on until 16th October 1944 when he was released to sit for his Second Mates Certificate.

On obtaining his Second Mates Certificate he rejoined RSL and was appointed third mate on the "**Empire Baxter**" on the 8th February 1945. He served on various RSL ships as third and second Officer. He obtained his Master Certificate on 10th September 1951 and was appointed Chief Officer of the **Bradford City** on 3rd December 1951. He resigned from RSL in April 1953. He was to remain at sea for a further six and a half years, finally coming ashore in December 1959.

Early in 1960 he commenced working in the Bristol Channel area as a Marine and Cargo Surveyor, he became well known and respected by P & I Clubs, Shipping Company and the sea fraternity. He retired in 1990 and enjoyed an active retirement.

He will be missed by all his friends. We send our sympathy to his wife, Shiela, and to his family.

Correspondence :- Our member Mr. Bob Christmas writes to "**Shipmates**" saying how much he enjoys reading the Newsletter with all the little snippets, and news about the Reardon Smith Line. He joined the company as a Deck Apprentice, and sailed on the "**King City**"(3) with Captain Ward when his wife, and his daughter Dorothy were on voyage No.5. He mention that he used to play cards with Mrs. Ward and Dorothy the Apprentices taking turns. The reward was coffee and biscuits. Therw was always a tin of Quality Street for the Apprentices use on the table.

He was hospitalised in India and Mrs. Ward and Dorothy used to visit him regularly, he remember saying to them one day "Don't let the Captain sail without me".

The Deck Apprentices had the job of painting the deckhead in the tween deck with silver paint, this was after carrying a cargo of coal, The coal dust had to be brushed off before painting, below is a photograph of the four Apprentices covered in coal dust, with Mrs. Ward in one photograph and Captain Ward in the other. Bob went 2nd officer in coastal trade until going to shore employment.



Nobby, Tony, Mrs. Ward & Mr. Christmas.

Capt. Ward and Apprentices.

News from Members.

Our Member **Mr. K. Brown** from Cardiff writes to say he has had several spells in hospital recently and still trying to recover from his illness, we hope he is feeling better and wish him a quick recovery.

Mr. Brown's connection with the Reardon Smith was that he went to the Reardon Smith Nautical College for two years, whereafter he went to a college in London to finish his training.

During the second world war he joined the Reardon Smith ship "**Barrwhin**" and got sunk in the North Atlantic Ocean. He mentioned that he is a friend of Mr. Edgar Parr who worked in the Reardon Smith Office from leaving school until he left to go to the second world war. Perhaps some of our members can remember Mr. Parr.

Our Member **Mr. Keith Morgan** (Chief Engineer) has had an accident, where he broke his leg while cleaning windows. After having four weeks with his leg in traction it did not heal, and with a further 13 weeks with his leg in plaster, he is still not allowed to put his foot to the ground. Get well soon Keith from all our members and stick to the engineering..

A letter was received from Capt. Mike Hurst who is well and busy with his Furniture Making & Restoring Business in Plymouth. Mike was pleased to read about the "**King City**" (3) in the last Newsletter, bringing back memories and names when he sailed on the vessel such as Idris Williams (Master) Oliver Lindsay (Mate) Geff Garlick (2nd Mate) Tom Souya (3rd Mate) Alec Svenson (Chief Engineer).

We had a letter from **Mr. Jack Barnes MBE** he seems to be enjoying his retirement in the nice town of Ross-On-Way . If I remember rightly Jack did his first trip to sea on the "**New Westminster City**" (3) in 1957 it was a short voyage from Limrick, Ireland to Galverston for a cargo of grain for Glasgow. I was the Second Engineer at the time.

Michael Owens of Swansea writes to say he now works for a large Norwegian Company called Bergesen's. He misses the feel of the smaller family companies like the Reardon Smith Line. Having left Cardiff Ship Management he joined a small Norwegian Company, then they were taken over by Bergesen's. He will always remember the Company logo :- "Big enough to matter small enough to care". He mentioned that he enjoyed reading in the last Newsletter the letter about M.V. "**Victoria City**" being in Corinto and all the palaver that went on in that port while the vessel was there.

Change of Names :-

The names of the famous ports in India where we spent many hot and sweaty days, are to be changed, they are as follows :-

Bombay becomes Mumbai

Madras becomes Chennai

Calcutta becomes Kolkata

Change of Telephone Number :-

The telephone code number for Cardiff changed in June 1999 the code was 01222 it is now 029-20. The old code number will run alongside the new number for about six months.

Change of post code :-

My post code for Cardiff changed in May 1999 the new code is:- **CF14** .

Note:- If you sent in an article to "**Shipmates**" and it is not published in this issue it will be in the next issue. We want more stories and experiences,

THIRD OFFICERS

Third Officers come in four lengths: short, medium, long and just plain clumsy. A Third Officer is Columbus with cough drops in his hip pocket, Drake with dandruff on his shoulders and Thor Heyerdal with a lifeboat list in his hand. He can be found spilling ink on the chart, oil on the deck and peas on the table. No one can be saving for so much from so little : a Jaguar, a CD player, a chicken farm, a wife, a video camera and a fortnight on the loose in Thailand.

He likes chorus girls, sports cars, West End shows, receiving mail, Heineken lager, whistling, Cher and going ashore. He hates lifeboats, flags, signalling, light lists and junior engineers on principle having been told to, girls mothers, ex-meridians, eight o'clock in the morning, nights on board and writing home.

Only he can trip up, fall down, crash into things, wear crepe soled shoes or climbing boots on the bridge, talk politics, steal the chartroom pencil, tell the Mate his star sights are wrong, drop the Captain's binoculars and still live.

To his mother he is St. Christopher, to his girlfriend a mathematical genius and the answer to a maiden's prayer, to the engineers a telegraph swinger and to the Captain the straw that broke the camel's back.

And who is it who greets the Second Mate at midnight with a smile and says " the log has carried away, the gyro is on the blink, there's a storm brewing up and there's no tea left in the supper box" - no other than that broad shouldered hunk, the modern day Marco Polo - THE THIRD OFFICER.

Healthy advice by a lady 101..

There is nothing the matter with me, I'm as healthy as can be,
 I have arthritis in both knees, and when I talk I talk with a wheeze,
 My pulse is weak, my blood is thin, but I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in,
 Arch supports I have for my feet, or I wouldn't be able to be on the street,
 Sleep is denied me night after night, but every morning I feel alright,
 My memory's failing, my head's in a spin, but I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in,
 The moral is this tale I unfold, that, that for you and me that is growing old,
 It's better to say I'm fine with a grin than to let folks know the shape that I'm in,
 How do I know that my youth is all spent ? Well, my get up and go has got up and went,
 But I really don't mind when I think with a grin of all the grand places my get has been,
 Old age is golden I've heard said, but I sometimes wonder when I get into bed,
 With my ears in the drawer, my teeth in the cup, my eyes on the table till I wake up,
 Ere sleep overtake me, I say to myself is there anything I could lay on the shelf,
 When I was young my slippers were red, I could kick my heels right over my head,
 When I was older my slippers were blue, but I still could dance the whole night through,
 Now I older my slippers are black, I walk to the store and puff my way back,
 I get up each morning and dust off my wits, and pick up the paper and read the "OBITS".
 If my name is still missing I know I'm not dead, so I have a good breakfast and back to bed.

Capt.M.G.B.Thomas.

BANANA WAR

The linking of the words "banana" and "war" revived sharp Merchant navy wartime memories for me.

What happened to those wonderful old Fyffee Banana boats that shuttled passengers and fruit between Europe and the Caribbean Islands in the thirties ?

Converted to a Rescue role in wartime they were fitted with powerful launches, medical facilities and a truly heroic crew. They were always a morale booster when they jointed a convoy.

They carried no cargo, but their big refrigerated holds were filled with barrels which were themselves full of table tennis balls. The ships were almost unsinkable. There was talk that one stubborn little devil had taken three torpedoes and had still managed to reach a safe port with its crowded survivors.

Ships in convoy were under strict orders not to stop to pick up men in the water from ships that had been hit, you were almost sure to get hammered yourself when stopped. Seamen hated that scene.

The banana boats were Rear-end Charlies in the convoy, and would always slow down to shepherd a straggler or stop to pick up survivors whatever the weather or danger.

My fondest memory was of a returned convoy in Liverpool Bay forming a long line ahead to take pilots aboard. The Rescue/Banana boat would go up ahead to bid farewell to the Commodore, then she turned and came close down the line of ships. Her scratchy old Tannoy was blasting out the "Yes we have no bananas" song and in the wing of the bridge the Fyffes Captain was doffing a battered bowler hat in lieu of his uniform cap, to the ringing cheers of the ships crew.

An if you were very lucky, you would catch a glimpse of a pretty blue clad nurse up on the boatdeck as they swept past.

Presented by Squadron Leader B Britton Australia.

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We welcome aboard the following new **"Shipmates"** members since the last issue:-

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|----------------------------|--|
| Mr. Alan Vincent | from Cardiff, who sailed with the Reardon Smith fleet as an Engineer. |
| Mrs. M. Ellerby | from Hornsea, Humberside, is the wife of the late Captain Ellerby who was master in many of the Reardon Smith vessels. Mrs Ellerby sailed many voyages with Capt. Ellerby. |
| Mr. A. Thomas | from Cardiff, he went to the Reardon Smith Nautical College. |
| Mr. Keith Llewellyn | from Cardiff, he sailed with the Reardon Smith fleet as an Engineer. |
| Mrs. S. Lemon | from Nettuno, Italy, is the wife of the late Captain Lemon, Director and Deck Superintendent for the Reardon Smith Line. |
| Mr. John Evans | who served his apprenticeship with RSL. |
| Mr. Mike Ridley | from Elham, Kent, he was Chief Engineer with the RSL in the 1970's |