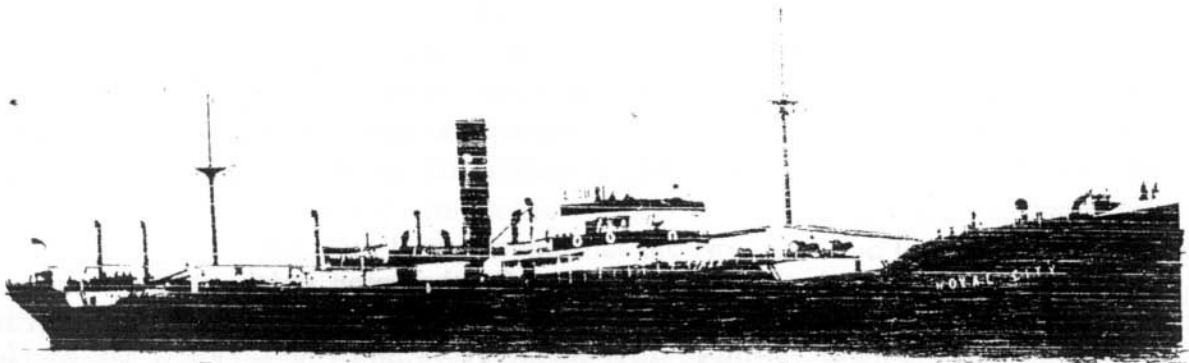




SHIPMATES

Reardon Smith Seafarer's Newsletter

Issue No.20 September 2001.



"Royal City"

"Royal City" 5,411 gross tons was built by Earle's Shipbuilding and Engineering Co. Ltd., Hull, in 1913 as the "Fedriko Galvic" for Nan. a Vap Unione, Ausrria-Hungary ; 1914 she went to Globus Rehederel A.G., Germany and renamed "Erfrid". In 1919 surrendered as a prize, and allocated to the United Kingdom and allotted to C.T.Bowring & Co. Ltd under their management. In 1920 Reardon Smith & Sons Ltd., bought the vessel and she went into the St.Just Shipping Company Ltd., fleet where she was renamed the "Royal City". In 1928 vessel was sold to D.C. & J.C. Mazarakai, Greece, and renamed "Anna Mazaraki" on the 27th May 1942 vessel was wrecked at Stable Island which is off the coast of Newfoundland.

"Riol" built by Bremer Valkan Schiffbau and Maschinenfabrik, Vegesack, as "Riol" for Roland Line Akt. Ges. Germany, she was 5,341 tons gross weight. In August 1914 vessel was detained at Valparaiso with damaged machinery. In 1919 surrendered as a prize, and taken over by the British Shipping Controller. In 1921 she went to the Leeds Shipping Company, Ltd. (RSL), and in 1927 was sold to Jugoslavenski- Amerikanaka Plovida, Lloyd d.d.. 1940 she went to the Crest Shipping Co.Ltd., London, renamed "Fircrest". Torpedoed and sunk by U boat in the North Atlantic in position 58° 52' North 06° 34' West on the 25th August 1940..

When the "Shipmates" subscription forms for this year were returned to me many members wrote a comment on the back of the form. There was one in particular and that was from Commodore Mark Higgins MBE which read:-

" Hello Alec,

Hope you are keeping fit and well. Remember when we took the "Cornish City" out of Birkenhead and the problems you had with the main engine. Anchored mid Irish Sea and a southerly gale on top of it all it, was a nice introduction for a Master and Chief Engineer on their maiden voyage.

All the very best,

Mark.

From this note it seemed that Mark wanted me to write a story about our maiden voyage together on the "Cornish City"(4). We had sailed together previously on the "New Westminster City"(3). At that time Commodore Higgins was the Chief Officer and I was the Second Engineer. Twentyone months later we both were appointed to the "Cornish City", Commodore Higgins as first trip Master and my first trip as Chief Engineer.

I joined the "Cornish City" at Southampton on the 24th october 1959 as a supernumerary Chief Engineer, the ship was discharging part of a grain cargo, and the final discharge port was Birkenhead. The Chief Engineer was Mr. McGuire who was to leave the vessel at Birkenhead. I, doing my first trip as Chief Engineer on the coastal passage, was to learn about the paperwork and the Chief Engineer's duties. Captain Cox was the master. The coastal passage was very good. When the ship arrived we anchored at the anchorage at Liverpool Bay. This was about noontime, the sea was getting rough and the wind increasing, the forecast was that a gale was imminent. By tea time there was a full southerly gale in force and rough seas. The Radio Officer came into the dining saloon and said there was all sorts of messages being sent out from ships at the anchorage, where some were dragging their anchors. One urgent message from a small ship saying they had sea water entering the engine room due to a ship side sea valve breaking off the ship's hull, and they were making ever effort to beach the ship. Like most of the ships at the anchorage Captain Cox decided to weigh anchor and steam across to the anchorage off Douglas, Isle of Man to get shelter in the lee of the land.

Daylight the next morning, the storm had passed and all the ships started steaming back to the Liverpool Bay anchorage, it was quite a sight to see them racing across the Irish Sea, some with black smoke pouring out their funnels, full steam ahead, all trying to be first in line to get a River Mersey Pilot. That morning the "Cornish City" proceeded up the River Mersey and docked at Birkenhead.

At Birkenhead while the ship was discharging the grain cargo there were shore engineers employed on the ship to do voyage repairs. Now, some bright person or spark from some engineer's office thought up a bright idea how to make the main engine more efficient and save fuel by doing a big modification to the main engine cooling water system to raise the main engine cylinder jacket cooling water 10F degrees higher than the piston cooling water temperature. All sorts of new pipes and valves were fitted in the cooling water system at the back of the engine.

The ships company were:-

Master:-	Captain M. Higgins	Chief Engineer:-	Alec Osborne
Chief Officer:-	Carnie Davidson	2nd Engineer:-	Jack Chatten
2nd. Officer:-	Tom Thistleton	3rd. Engineer:-	Alexander Robertson
3rd Officer:-	?	4th. Engineer:-	Mr. Woods
Radio Officer:-	Eddie Willocks	Junr. Engineer:-	Mr. G. Thorne
Chief Steward:-	Willy Davies.	Junr. Engineer:-	?

Four deck Apprentices.

British sailors and Arab Donkeymen and Firemen.

Vessel sailed from Birkenhead. After half an hour sailing down the River Mersey at slow speed there was a soft squeak coming from the main engine crankcase which could be heard when one of the crankcase inspection windows were opened. I was not very happy about this and telephoned the bridge to tell Captain Higgins and asked if we could stop the main engine for a few minutes to inspect the crankcase. The pilot was consulted and after some minutes later the Captain phoned the engine room saying we could stop. It was found that the No.3 side rod top end bearings were warmer than the other bearings and only a trickle of oil was coming out the bearing. The engine was re-started and we proceeded down river, I advised Captain Higgins it was best to run at no more than half speed until we got to a safe anchorage at Liverpool Bay to examine things. Once at anchor the No.3 side rod top end bearings were opened and there was no damage to the bearings. By lifting the upper piston to expose the oil holes in the lower half of the bearings, it showed there was a very small amount of oil reaching these bearings and there was a blockage somewhere. After dismantling many parts we found a large piece of rag that some shore fitter had left in the oil supply pipe after he had reassembled the lub oil pipes. This piece of rag had finally lodged in the oil supply pipe feeding the main bearing. This oil supply also lubricated the bottom end bearing and passed up through a hole in the connecting rod to feed the side rod top end bearings. A strong letter was sent to head office to complain about the poor quality of workmanship by the shore repairs at Birkenhead.

This was quite a job with the ship rolling and pitching, and took 12 hours to complete this work. In the meantime there was a weather forecast giving a southerly gale imminent in the Mersey area, so we were fighting against time to get the engine boxed up and get away from the area. Commodore Higgins was extremely worried first trip Master and had to put up with this lot. After my experience coming from Southampton to this anchorage and witnessing the southerly gale the last time the ship was at anchor in this area, I was very worried and glad to see the back end of Liverpool Bay.

Vessel sailed from the anchorage bound for Casablanca to load a full cargo of phosphate for China. During this passage I was playing around and adjusting the main engine jacket water cooling system to get the water temperatures that the new system was supposed to operate. The cargo was loaded within 24 hours.

Three days after leaving Casablanca sailing along the North African coast the main engine No.3 cylinder started to overheat passing gases from the top

piston. Commodore Higgins gave me permission to stop the main engine and to strip out the unit to examine the pistons etc.. The weather was fine and the sea was smooth, so it was comfortable for lifting heavy weights. It was found that the piston rings had worn to wafer thin in both upper and lower pistons. The coastline was in sight. After about 2 hours Captain Higgins telephoned me to say that there was quite a fast current flowing, about 3 to 4 knots and the ship was drifting towards the coast, so again the pressure was on to box the engine up and get underway again.

Vessel arrived at the Suez Canal for the Canal passage and we had the usual visitors Sandy McNabe and George Roby with their bum boats selling their Egyptian wares. Amazing thing about Sandy McNabe he could speak the Welsh language and all West Wales ship masters used to converse in Welsh with him.

Everything went well until we got to the South China Sea. It was now December and the vessel was in quite rough weather when the main engine No.2 unit started to overheat, the same trouble we had in the Mediterranean Sea. The engine was stopped and the cylinder opened out, again it was the same problem the piston rings in both upper and lower pistons had worn completely away. The ship was rolling badly which made working conditions difficult. Finally we arrived at Shanghai.

At this point I was concerned that we had only been away from the U.K. 2 months and had used 20 spare piston rings, normally on a twelve months voyage only 30 rings would be used, if things carried on like this we would use all the spare rings onboard in a very short time. One cannot buy Doxford piston rings at the next bunker station.

A strong letter was sent from Shanghai to head office advising I did not think much about the modified main jacket water system with the rise in jacket water temperature it was too hot for the lubricating oil to do its work to lubricate the piston rings. Also with this amount of extra work load on the ships engineers repairing the engine seemed to be unnecessary. I must say the engineers were a hard working bunch of men. I pointed out with the engine stoppages the vessel had lost almost one full day with these delays, and from this port on I was going to run the engine jacket water temperature at 150°F the temperature recommended by the engine builder William Doxfords. Later I had a letter from head office saying that I was right to run the engine at the original Doxford temperatures and not to use the modified system.

Being winter time weather conditions in Shanghai were not very good. It was freezing cold and snowing off and on. When the ship arrived the Chinese Authorities carried out a search of the accommodation this was at 6.45am and wanted all officers and crews members to stand on the main deck midship while this was being done. The ships personnel had no cold weather gear to wear and under these freezing conditions there were plenty of grumbles about standing in the freezing cold. After much discussion the Authorities let us stand inside the forward accommodation. There was another such search a few days later at 7.00am. Any atlas found with a map of the China Sea with the name of the island of Formosa on it, the page would be ripped out. Some personal things were confiscated.

The cargo discharge at Shanghai was very messy. The lined cargo slings had holes in the linings and the phosphate was pouring out of the holes onto the deck and into the sea water over the ships side before it reached the hoppers on the shore. Cargo was worked 24 hours a day and I can remember one cold freezing night at about two o'clock in the morning I was called out of bed. The No. 1 port steam winch had broken down. The port crankpin had sheered off. the 2nd Engineer Jack Chatten and a Junior Engineer came on the job to fix the winch. Firstly there was a high mound of Phosphate and snow piled up against the winch and this had to be cleared away. After much effort in removing the old stub of the crankpin the new one was fitted and the winch was finally boxed. A job that took 3½ hours working in snow showers and freezing cold which would had taken 1½ hours under normal conditions.

Ship's crews were only allowed to use the International Club in Shanghai. This was a large club that the British owned in earlier days and was used by British bank managers and merchants, etc.. It had a very, very long bar, the longest bar I had ever seen up to that time. Bottle beer was available, and in the building was a shop selling Chinese wares. There were only 5 or 6 taxies available, the main transport was by bicycle rickshaw. The Chinese made a very good looking fur lined snow boot and Captain Higgins fancied buying a pairs of these so we went to a shoe shop. No English was spoken but after a few signs etc. a pair of shoes was found to suit the Captain, the shop assistants were ever so kind and helpful.

The vessel was ready to sail early morning on New Year Day. Sailing was delayed due to dense fog covering the harbour, duty staff onboard were ready to standby and I went to the ship's bridge to see the position for sailing. There was a glorious sight to be seen. From that height above sea level there was a absolutely clear blue sky. Lying below the bridge deck was a blanket of pure white thick fog, above the fog were scores of ships masts small and large. Most of them were sailing ships masts, while there were a few funnels showing. After an hour or so the fog lifted and the ship sailed bound for Brisbane.

Things settled down and the voyage went as follows calling at the ports.

Brisbane to load grain for Basrah, then to

Mormugoa to load iron ore for Chiba, Japan, then to

Geraldton to load grain for London arriving there 7th June 1960.

While at Mormugoa the Second Steward was hospitalised to have an appendicitis operation. A few days before completion of the cargo the Captain had a report from the hospital to say that he would not be fit to sail with the vessel. He had to be paid off. The hospital was at Panjim and Captain Higgins requested me to go with him to the hospital to witness signatures. A taxi was laid on which took over 2 hours to reach the hospital, driving through the narrow roads and countryside. The Steward was in a little room on his own and was recovering well. The surgeon came to the room with some blood on his apron to sign some papers. I remember passing the operating theatre which had openings in the walls for ventilation, no air conditioning there in those days. I could see raised marble slabs where the operations were carried out and some patients lying on them. On the return journey we called at St. Francis Cathedral. This was was being renovating, and situated in the lovely Indian country side. A journey to be remembered

Editor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

With reference to articles in the last "Shipmates", John Hewson from Dubai writes his story while serving on m.v. "Queen City" (2). Captain Bryan Boyer also enlarge on Leighton Seabrooke's story about the "Nispuk". Bryan also writes about his maiden voyage as Master on m.v. "Prince Rupert City".

Dear Alec,

I wish to congratulate you on your taking up the gauntlet as Editor of the SHIPMATES. It must, at times, be very frustrating but at other times very rewarding.

Seeing my name, again, in a 'Reardon Smith' publication after so many years has brought back memories of the many good times spent over the almost twenty years that I was with "Reardons" as 'man and boy'.

The photograph of the 'Queen City' No.2 in the June 2001 Issue of SHIPMATES reminded me that I had my first trip to sea on this fine vessel. Joining her as Engineer Cadet in the summer of 1961 at Hamburg.

The voyage still remains quite clear in my memory, particularly when we eventually berthed in Wallaroo, Australia to load grain for the U.K. Upon arrival in Wallaroo we found the 'Atlantic City' already alongside and loading.

I suppose with us being the smaller of the two vessels we actually loaded and sailed before the 'Atlantic City'.

At the time of our sailing some of the Officers and crew from the 'Atlantic City' were on the jetty to wish us bon voyage, one of whom, was the Chief Engineer, Mr A.F. Osbourne.

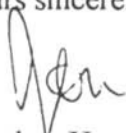
Our Chief Engineer, Steve Willis was leaning over the rail talking to you when the first engine movement was rung on the telegraph. The start air was blown through the engine, indicators cocks were closed and with 'Bluey' Smith at the controls, the first start was initiated. This was accompanied with the sound of all relief valves being lifted - Mr. A. F. Osbourne doubling over with guffaws of laughter and Steve Willis saying, without any change of expression, ' Haven't you heard turbo chargers cutting in before Alec?' This comment, of course, only made you laugh even more!

As far as I can remember the following names made up the rest of the Officers :-

Master	J. Vaughan (1 st Trip Master)	Ch.Eng.	Steve Willis
Ch. Officer	G. Ellerby	2 nd Eng.	'Bluey' Smith
2 nd Officer	?	3 rd Eng.	Harry Benny
3 rd Officer	D. Mockett	4 th Eng.	Peter Hurrell
Radio Officer	G. Walker	Jnr Engs	W. Parry
Chief Steward	Bob Beasley		Rolf ?
Electrical Eng.	Wilf Carr		Heinz ?
Deck Apprentices	Peter Hemnell	Eng. Cadets	C. Mitchell
	Ian ?		J. Hewson

Keep up the good work and I hope to be in contact again soon. All the best.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Hewson

Captain Bryan A. Boyer, M.N.I.

28, Packe Close, Feering, Colchester, Essex, CO5 9LP.

Tel: 01376 570687. Fax: 01376 571334 Mobile: 07899 968338

Thursday, 21st June 2001

Mr. Alec Osborne
(Shipmates),
24 "E" Heol Hir
Llanishen,
Cardiff CF14 5AE.

Dear Alec,

Having read Issue No.19, June 2001 of 'Shipmates' and enjoyed the article by Leighton Seabrooke regarding the assistance rendered to the sailing vessel "NISPUK" by the M.V. "PORT ALBERNI CITY" there are a couple of points that need to be added.

The summer of 1976 in the North Atlantic was particularly remarkable in that the Azores High Pressure system became very firmly established over the ocean giving rise to light winds and very settled weather for many weeks.

The "NISPUK" which was a converted Friesian Island trawler, with a crew of four including one woman, had been to the United States, as Leighton said, to join in the American Bi-Centenary celebrations in New York harbour.

On her return voyage back to Europe, she had run into the large oceanic area of calms and light winds and had been severely delayed.

On the afternoon of our encounter, we did not actually receive a "MAY-DAY" from the "NISPUK". The Second Mate on the 12 – 1600 hrs bridge watch on our vessel sighted a strange sail right ahead on our course and had called me to the bridge.

Shortly after my arrival in the wheelhouse, the "NISPUK" called us on VHF Channel 16, with a request that we close her and if possible, supply her with food stores as they were running very low on food.

We came up close aboard her about one hour later and I gave orders to Leighton and his merry men to bring up the stores they needed. Our own vessel was loaded with a full deck cargo of packaged timber from British Columbia, so it was no easy job for the Mate and his deckhands to sway down the sacks of potatoes etc., from the top of the deck stow.

While the re-supply operation was going on, the lady crew member came on the VHF and asked me if we could spare some cigarettes and a bottle of whiskey, which we were very pleased to do.

We advised Cardiff naturally, because it all had to be accounted for but later Captain Jack Lemon told me that the Company would not be pursuing any claim against the "NISPUK"s insurers for the stores we supplied her.

It was very strange to meet up with the "NISPUK" again some weeks later, when she broadcast a "MAY-DAY" as she was in very bad weather and making water. As Leighton said in his article, when we did come up with her the skipper and crew were holding their

own and decided not to abandon the vessel. They asked us to stand by in case the situation on board got worse.

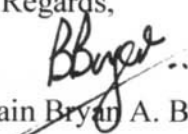
Meanwhile we had contacted Falmouth Coastguard and a salvage rescue tug was dispatched to her aid. A Navy warship also arrived on the scene and took over the operation and released our vessel so we continued on our way.

Our second encounter was about 100 miles west of Ushant in typical Western Approaches weather, a falling barometer, gale force southwesterly winds, rough seas and a heavy southerly swell and rain and fog!

The "NISPUK" had made a call in Ireland and had changed her crew, although the skipper was still the same man.

It was good to be able to render help and I always remember the quiet professionalism of my officers and crew at that time.

Best Regards,


Captain Bryan A. Boyer, M.N.I.

Our member Captain Donald Jack's widow Patrica wrote me a note when she sent in her subscription form, quote:-

"I was practically born on a Reardon Smith ship, in fact was visiting a ship in Birkenhead in 1939 at the age of 3 years old, when the war started" unquote.

Before world war 2 and a few years after senior ship's officers never left the ship to go home on leave, the wives and children come to the ship when in a home port. With long voyages the fathers never spent any time at home with their children.

Patrica's father was Captain A.G. Passmore from Combe Martin, he joined the Reardon Smith Line as a deck apprentice in 1918 spending all his sea going career with the company, he crossed the bar in the master's quarters onboard the "Eastern City" after completing a voyage at the port of Belfast in December 1963.

Captain Donald Jack who came from Edinburgh joined the Reardon Smith Line in 1949 and met up with Patrica while she was visiting he father on one of the ship's that Donald was serving on. Donald served with the company until he retired. He crossed the bar in 1995.

Patrica has been connected with the Reardon Smith Line all her life.

RELICS

Some of our older members may have sailed on the S.S. "Madras City" or her sister ship the S.S. "Orient City". Can they remember the elegant dining room chairs in the dining saloon of the two ships? Very few were aware that the chairs once graced the first class upper dining room of the long gone but not forgotten R.M.S. "Mauretania".

After twenty eight years of service the "Mauretania" went for demolition in 1935. Her fittings went up for auction in that year, most of the lots were purchased by a Mr. Martin of Guernsey and a Mr. Avery of Bristol. The lots remaining unsold were warehoused

until 1939 when they were again put up for auction, possibly due to the political situation at the time the lots did not attract very good prices and fine pieces were obtained at bargain prices. Some lots were purchased by/on account of shipyard interests. All the lots sold were discreetly marked with identification marks of the "Mauretania".

Some of the furniture bought in 1935 can still be found on display and use in Guernsey. Also there is a hotel in Bristol where some items can still be found. For the chairs that found their way to the "Madras" and "Orient" Cities, hopefully when the vessels went for scrap they found a good home.

O.J.T.L.

SUPERINTENDENT'S LUCK

It was in the summer of 1952, the S.S. "Tacoma City" was in Barry loading a cargo of coal for Buenos Aires, the Master was Captain R.E. Shilstone. It was a Saturday and pleasant apart from clouds of coal dust from the three tips working the vessel.

However, the crew could look forward to a peaceful afternoon as it was traditional for all loading to cease at 1200 hours on a Saturday in South Wales ports so that the coal trimmers and those working on the coal tips could if they so wished enjoy the national game of rugby union.

That morning the attending Marine Superintendent instructed one of the apprentices to go into the pantry where the Chief Steward was waiting with a carton (rationing was still on) and place the carton in the unlocked boot of his car, a black Austin which was parked on the far side of the quayside rail tracks and safely clear of any rail track operations. The apprentice did exactly as instructed. After lunch the lad was apprehended by an irate superintendent who on checking the boot

of his car found no carton. The lad insisted that he had taken the carton ashore and stowed it in the boot of a black Austin car. They both went to the gangway and looked across at the car, the lad looked at the superintendent and said "Sir you have shifted your car a little, when I placed the carton in the boot it was parked abreast of the gangway". Christmas arrived early in 1952 for the unknown owner of a black Austin whose car boot also happened to be unlocked.

Later in the afternoon, the superintendent having past the risk of apoplexy but now with greasy hands, sought out the same apprentice again, whose day aboard it happened to be, to obtain some paraffin from the lamp locker. Whilst they were in the locker getting the paraffin the superintendent noticed there were a surprising number of full two gallon cans marked Esso. Petrol being rationed and his car petrol tank low he said "take one of the cans and pour it into my car's tank and I will inform the Mate so he will be aware of the matter", and then added "make sure you get the right car this time". The apprentice said "aye-aye Sir".

About an hour later the superintendent disembarked to motor home-----you may have guessed it, the car would not start. The can contained paraffin. The air became blue but not by car exhaust smoke.

The ship having stored in Barry the paraffin tanks had been filled and the surplus placed in empty Esso petrol cans.

I will leave to your imagination what was said to the humble apprentice.

O.J.T.L.

New Members.

"Shipmates" welcome aboard Mr. A. Henderson from Churchdown, Gloucestershire, who sailed on the M.V. "Vancouver City" (2) from May 1950 to January 1951. Mr. Henderson got to know about the Reardon Smith Seafarers Newsletter from one of our member's the Secretary of the Liverpool branch of the T.S. Vindicatrix Association Mr. Charles Boyd.

"Shipmates" welcome aboard Peter Hemnell from Nottingham who was an apprentice with the Reardon Smith Line and did spend 3½ years on the M.V. "Queen City" and did his full apprenticeship period there. After passing his 2nd Mates examination he joined Common Brothers of Newcastle sailing on tankers, where at that time paid more money had accommodation air conditioning and a swimming pool, but, he disliked the short stays in port. After obtaining his 1st Mates certificate he took up shore employment, joined Rolls Royce aero engine company working on computers and telephone exchanges then RR sold that section of the company to EDS. Peter continued with EDS where they installed the new London Transport integrated ticketing system using smartcard technology. He mentions that when he was at the marine college there was another apprentice from the "Queen City" called Ralph Woodard,

"Shipmates" welcome Peter Stearn from Staveley, Chesterfield. He is also a member of the T.S. Vindicatrix Association (Midland Branch). Peter got to know about the Reardon Smith Seafarers Newsletter after a visit to Leighton Seabrooke's pub "The Queens Head" He sailed on the S.S. "Jersey City" in 1946 when she was a coal burning ship, Captain Alfred Ward was the Master at that time.

FREEDOM OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF

On the 3rd September, 2001 the Merchant Navy in Wales, is to be honoured by being presented with the Freedom of the City and County of Cardiff by the Lord Mayor Mr. Russell Goodway on behalf of the Citizens of Cardiff. This being in recognition of the huge debt which the City of Cardiff owes to the Merchant Navy of Wales

The ceremony and reception is to be held in the City Hall, Cardiff, entrance to which will be by invitation only.

As far as I am aware this is the first time any city has bestowed this honour on the Merchant Navy.

The date of the ceremony is most appropriate, the 3rd of September having been designated Merchant Navy Day

A report on the happenings of that day will be in the December issue of Shipmates.

Of historical interest, the founder of, what was to become Cardiff's largest shipping company, Sir William Reardon Smith and Sons of Cardiff, the first Sir William, being a benefactor of the City was presented with the Honorary Freedom of the City of Cardiff on the 26th March, 1928.

O.J.T.L.

THE UNDERWRITER--- An Ode of Sympathy

It is much to be regretted
That your goods are slightly wetted,
However, our lack of liability is plain,
For our latest Bill of Lading
Which is proof against evading,
Bears exceptions for seawater, rust and rain,
Also sweat, contamination,
Fire and all depreciation ever heard of in a ship,
And our due examination ,
Which we always make at destination,
Shows your cargo much improved by the trip.

Furthermore the Note of Protest shows,
That the Master blew his nose,
And the hatch covers were demolished by the gale.
Oh, we'll all stick together
To prove it's heavy weather,
For we've got the cargo owner by the tail;
So reserving all defences,
Alibis and false pretences,
We suggest that your underwriter man
Is that guy that's out of luck,
We always pass the buck,
Yes –we always duck the issue if we can

'Tis a cause of grief sincere,
And we almost weep to hear
You are claiming for your cargo wet by rain.
It really is a crime
That you're wasting all your time,
For our Bill of Lading clauses make it plain,
That from ullage, rust or seepage,
Water, sweat or just plain leakage,
Act of God, restraint of Princes, theft or war,
Loss, damage or retention,
Lockout, strike or circumvention,
Blockage, interdict or loss twixt ship and shore,
Quarantine or heavy weather,
Fog and rain or both together,
We're protected from all these and many more,
And its very plain to see
That our liability
As regards your claim is absolutely nil,
So try your underwriter,
He's a friendly sort of blighter,
And is pretty sure to grin and foot the bill.

MEMORIAL SERVICE @ CARDIFF BAY

On Saturday, 12th May the anniversary of the erection of the memorial to seafarers at Cardiff Bay, was marked by a short, drum head type service, it was conducted by the Reverend K. Jordan, Chaplain to the Mission to Seamen, Cardiff. In bright sunshine members of the Merchant Navy Association (Wales) marched from Mount Stuart Square to the Memorial lead by the Comrades Corps of Drums. The salute was taken at the pier head by Commander J.M.D.Curties (Rtd RNR), Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the County. During the service wreaths were laid by Commander Curties, Lord Ellis Thomas, Mrs Lorraine Barrett AM and Alun Michael MP, Chairman of the MNA (Wales), Chairman of the South Wales Branch of the Russian Convoy Club and representatives from local shipping companies. The band of the Salvation Army played music for hymns and national anthems.

O.J.T.L.

The end of the 840 Class bulk carrier, m.v. "PRINCE RUPERT CITY"

Sometime ago, "Shipmates" carried some articles about the Cardiff Class 840 series bulk carrier, the motor vessel, "PRINCE RUPERT CITY"

The same vessel was my first command in the Readon Smith Line, having been promoted to Master by the Chairman, Mr. C. Chatterton on the 3rd September 1971.

To join the vessel, eight officers and myself together with 3 officers' wives traveled from London on an Iraqi Airlines flight to Baghdad, on the 6th September 1971. We overnighted at Baghdad then flew on down to Basra, where we picked up a Mercedes mini bus and drove off into the desert on our way to Fao where we boarded a beautiful Russian built air conditioned launch and were ferried out to the ship which lay at anchor off the entrance to the Shatt-al-Arab river.

On our journey across the trackless wastes of the desert, we saw blown up and wrecked locomotives that must have been there since the Second World War.

My first command lay at anchor off the Shatt-al-Arab for two months and then spent another two months in Um-Qasr and Basra, in company with the M.V. "VANCOUVER CITY" (Captain Jake Vaughan, commanding).

We ran out of just about everything to eat and had to resort to buying stringy looking Iraqi chickens and sheep.

I remember the Radio Officer bringing me a telegram one day (we used our radio transmitters all the time because there was no other way of getting or sending information). The telegram contained a message from Cardiff (Operations) asking me how much fuel I estimated we would have left when we finally sailed from Iraq. Since at that time I had absolutely no idea when we would begin to discharge our cargo of Canadian wheat, let alone complete and sail, I replied we would probably have only 100 tons of IFO left and nil diesel.

That must have caused dear old Bill Burge and Alec Westall to have kittens, as much later in the voyage I received a private letter from Capt Jack Lemon containing a quiet rebuke for sending the Chartering Dept into free fall and reminding me that "as Master I was expected to have a crystal ball at my shoulder."

The "Prince Rupert City" as reported in an earlier "Shipmates" was eventually sold to TMM as the "Yaqui" and sold on again.

On the 3rd February 1994, the "Price Rupert City" now sailing as the "Christinaki" under the Maltese flag and under yet another owner, loaded with a cargo of scrap, on passage from Liverpool to Vera Cruz, was hit by a sever gale when 249 miles west of Ireland. Heavy seas breaking on board the 23 year old bulk carrier carried away her hatch covers and she radioed that her holds were flooding.

A large scale search operation was mounted, but the ship and her crew of 27 Greeks and Filipinos were never found. She was the fourth aged bulk carrier to sink in the first two months of 1994 and before 1994 ended a total of 103 vessels world wide, totaling nearly 900,000 tons was lost. Among them were 16 bulk carriers lost with 147 crew.

Capt. B.Boyer.