



# SHIPMATES

Reardon Smith Seafarer's Newsletter

Issue No.33 December 2004



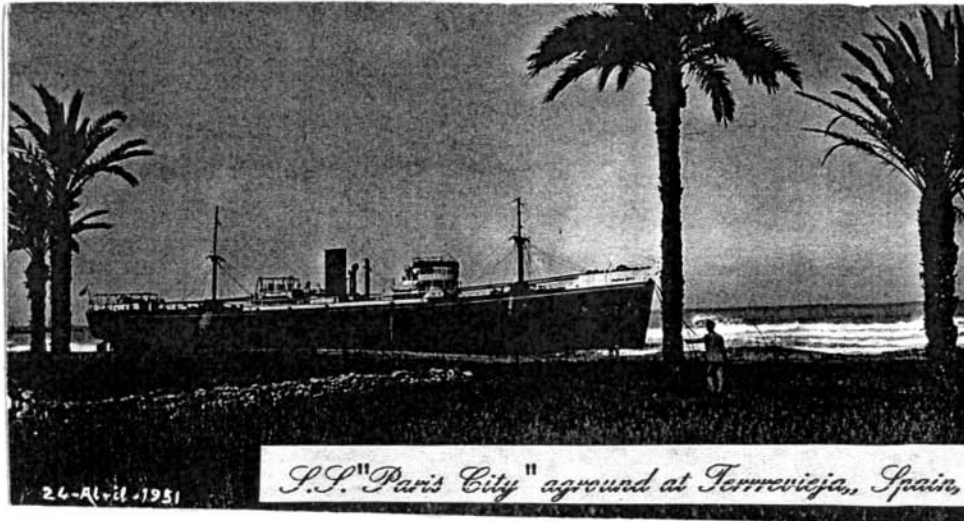
*Head Office, Devonshire House. Cardiff*

"Devonshire House" was built for Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons, Ltd., and the company moved into the premises on 8th December 1958. There is a garage, storerooms and emergency exit situated in the basement. There are three floors above ground served by two lifts. The windows fitted to the building were made in Germany, double glazed and were an improved design where they could be opened inward to clean the outside of the windows avoiding the use of ladders, also open outward for ventilation. The outside circular stairway at the rear of the building was enclosed in a round glass house. The building is now called "Park House", the crests of Smith's house flag on the bronze double doors have been removed.

A Happy Christmas  
and New year  
to all readers  
and their families



When issue No.5 of "Shipmates" was produced in December 1997 we only had 100 members. Since then several of those members have either crossed the bar or left "Shipmates". When our member Colin White wrote his story "Salt in the Wound" in the last issue and mentioned the "Paris City" I thought I should publish the story "Salvaging the S.S. "Paris City" again.



## SALVAGING THE S.S."PARIS CITY"

By KENNETH F. WADE

Marine salvage at the best of times, spells hard work, many disappointments and long hours frequently under hazardous conditions. It can also mean a severe test on mens patience as I believe the following episode will portray. I feel that there are two reasons why this story should be told, first from the point of view that it makes interesting reading to those interested in the sea, and secondly as a small tribute to as gallant a crew as ever my fortune to be **shipmates** with.

When this particular case occurred I was serving on board the salvage vessel "Hercules", then based in Gibraltar on a 24 hour salvage call. Her crew consisted of a British master and officers and Spanish seamen and leading hands, some 28 members all told. Quite sometime had passed since we had taken part in a good salvage job, and time had been occupied testing gear, pumps, diving equipment, burning plant etc, as is customary aboard such vessels in port, on stand by.

However on the afternoon of April 24 1951, we dropped everything, and put to sea in answer to a distress call which turned out different from the usual run of casualties. We contacted her by radio and found that she was the British cargo steamer "Paris City" aground some 270 miles along the east Spanish coast, near the small town of Torre Vieja. Apparently she was in light condition, aground fore and aft, on a sandy bottom with slight bottom damage. Owing to her light condition she had dragged her anchors and grounded in the very heavy weather which prevailed. The ship had used her engines, hove on her anchors, taken all prudent precautions, but the elements got the better of her. Indeed the weather was heavy, as we found out when we arrived some 28 hours later and anchored as close by her as we could, but the heavy breaking seas prevented us from boarding her from seaward. Nevertheless, having gone through the usual formalities of entering ship, customs etc, I accompanied the master by road to the place of stranding and we managed to board her after getting thoroughly soaked in the operation. We made a preliminary examination and the master drew up his plan of operation. The "Paris City" lay broadside on to the beach, with little or no water on her inshore side, and on her weather side an angry sea hammering at her with spray everywhere.

We agreed to lay out anchors and warp wires for hauling off gear as soon as we could establish contact with the ship. Owing to the confused sea around her it was difficult to find out just how much water she had outside her, but we commenced forthwith. The blocks, wires and stopper to form the deck purchase to warp wires were transported in our salvage launch to the jetty in the small harbour. From here we loaded them into a lorry and took them to the stranding place. Assisted by the crew of the stranded vessel we manhandled it all across the beach and so onboard by derrick.

The heavy warp wire (6 in.) we managed to get onboard by first contacting them with a rocket fired messenger from our salvage launch. How well I recall the incident, when complete with rocket gear and small messenger ropes we got as close to her as we dare, for the sea close to the ship was confused, and to handle a 20 h.p. launch in it was difficult. Our "skipper" fired the rocket, and, in his anxiety to get away from her side as soon as possible, all but missed her, giving rise to ribald comment which I leave to the imagination. Twenty-four hours later we had the gear laid out, heavy anchors and a tow connected to the "Hercules" as well.

And so the first of many fruitless attempts was made. We were joined the next day by another sister salvage vessel the "Herakles", and together made further attempts. Full power efforts on all our resources were made, but the "Paris City" refused to move an inch. By this time the weather had begun to ease, and with it the water level dropped and no hope of assistance from the tide, which in that area are considered so small as not to merit prediction.

Thus we entered the next stage of the affair, which was a dismantling programme. To lighten her further we stripped her of removal heavy weights which we could lay our hand on, without damaging the vessel at all. All timber, most of her derricks, lifeboats and davits – except one kept for emergency – and as many steel beams as we dare remove without further impairing her. The launches from the two salvage vessels were busy day and night towing lighters which we had hired locally, back and forth to the salvage vessels and loading all this gear to be safely stored. This completed, we set to again with every hope to see her leave her bed, but no such luck; a month gone by already. The situation had certainly deteriorated, the casualty had run out of fuel and was low on water. Consequently we reduced her crew to a bare working minimum and the remainder were sent home. The "Herakles" was called away on another urgent job and hope of bad weather assisting us to refloat her by accompanying rise in water, was gone until September.

We settled down to what we could now see was going to be a long draw out job. With the fine weather we were able to make a finer survey of the ground around her. By sounding and diver's reports we found there was a considerable amount of rock outside her, some with as little as four and a half feet over it and we estimated that she needed at least 9ft 6ins. of water to float. Obviously explosives were needed, and plenty of them. In order to keep the casualty alive as it were, we stripped down two tanks for her, and by carrying them in our salvage launch were able to keep them sufficiently supplied with fuel and water from our own stocks. Food they had, and the 15 remaining crew, though not in love with the idea, settled down to helping with what appeared to be a hopeless task.

Then we headed to Gibraltar, stored and took on all the blasting material we needed and two days later returned to tackle the job from a new angle. The brunt of this work fell on the diver, who was well practiced in the use of rock drills and explosives under water. He had one failing with his

attendant, the carpenter, he would talk far too much, but bolt him into his suit give him tools and some air – a good days work was the result. We converted one of the casualty's lifeboats into a divers workboat, and had to rig long lengths of compressed air hose down to the hauling off wires so as to get the drills out to where we wanted to work. Gradually however we overcame our difficulties. With fine weather the diver worked into the night using underwater lamps, and our frequent explosions became a common topic locally.

Perhaps it would be as well to dwell for a moment on local conditions. Torrevieja was some two miles away, and by June, with the locals and the summer holiday folk, we had become part of the community. We had been accepted as local members of the Casino, and in there, over various glasses of good Spanish wine the job was discussed. Local seafarers would shake their heads, and say that while they enjoyed the company of the Englishman, they had better gone off home, for the "Paris City" was there to stay. The stage was reached when organized coach trips arrived on the scene to see the ship that would not come off. From a nearby farm, fresh milk was exchanged daily for white bread baked onboard, and to cap it all one of our crew got married there. But with the occasional frivolity, wine parties etc., and the tedious work, it was telling. I could see it among the crew, and feel it myself. The monotonous daily round to pumping air to the diver, making up charges, blasting and recovering rock to dump ashore in the scorching sun, with no apparent result, was leading the men into more drinking bouts than was usual. June, July, August and still no visible result. There she lay, in the brilliant sun by day, and by night silhouetted against the palm trees and local small farms.

Eventually in September we exhausted all our stores and blasting material, and steamed back to Gibraltar to re-store, and it was then things began to move. Ironically enough, after all that work a freak storm sprang up in our absence and she showed her first signs of movement. They were slight, but it gave that long for hope. Here again it was visible among the crew; it was like a rejuvenation, they could not wait to get on the job again. The "Herakles" arrived with us and renewed efforts were made. With tows connected up and all warps working, we got some movement out of her. When the sea cleared after that attempt one could see clearly, through the water, the bed she had made for herself.

Down went the drills, more charges, more excavating and in the course of September, with occasional poor weather we got further promising moves out of her. I shall always remember the sensation of those initial moves; it was like the gift of a new sense, to feel the bumping, and feel her respond slightly to the movement of the seas. It was our first real reward for the work of five months. The men were happy; they worked with new vigour for they could see now that all their effort had not been in vain. They were even betting on the day that she would be ours, a pleasant thing to witness when one had to work them.

We knew that we could not leave here for a moment, and for the last five weeks that we were there – all short leave was cancelled. I worked around her during the day, and at night slept in the room which had been occupied by the second mate before he was sent home. At nights, I would sit and yarn with the red-haired Irish mate, who had been a great help to us, and who vowed that when he was master and unfortunate enough to get ashore, no salvage company would get him off. He would do it himself with all the practice that he had had over recent months. From my bunk I could hear her creaking, feel her gently roll and bump as her bilge keel touched the bottom, and I was happy. Rats had infested her and were even seen on occasions during the day. Because I was superstitious it was a healthy sign. The first signs of bad weather were manifesting themselves, and each time we took advantage, moving her stern slowly but surly nearer to the deep water. Diving hours were increased and the hands became weary at the pumps, but they had tasted victory and pressed on.

The beginning of final victory came on the night of October 14, it was a Sunday night and with heavy skies and an increasing wind, a swell worked up from the north-east. At 7 pm we boarded the "Paris City" with as many hands as we could spare and manned all winches connected to hauling off gear. Both tugs began pulling at 9 pm and gradually the weather increased. Rain set in, but it mattered little to me as I watched the warp wires inch their way aboard and meanwhile praying that the anchor would not drag. I saw grins on the faces of our men as it became more apparent that she was to be ours at last. They cared little for the danger that was ever present around them – that a deck purchase all singing tight, and straining should part a wire.

Dawn broke, and with it came a marked increase in the weather, we had been working almost 12 hours, and I kept watching those wires with my

fingers crossed, for if they parted, she could be thrown back into a worst position than she had been originally. Back and forth she veered, tightening and slackening the wires, and grinding over the ground we had so meticulously broken up for her passage out. As she opened up to seaward, so the protection that her inshore side afforded our launches was lessened. It was decided to send them away to try and make the small harbour for a lee. This I watched with uneasy mind, for the seas were coming in a series of three big rollers, as the heavy swell from the deep water broke over the shallows.

Our struggling launch made it and escaped into the harbour, but the "Herakles" launch had her tiller smashed, and helplessly she was driven onto the rocks at the top of the beach. Her timbers were stove in, propeller damaged, but I heaved a sigh, as out of the wrecked boat stepped the coxswain, shaken and drenched, but alive. We managed to get him over the bow of the "Paris City" by a Jacobs ladder, just as she was leaving the beach. Five minutes later, at 9 am she was afloat. It was definitely one of my greatest moments in the salvage game, to feel that vessel roll and pitch, and to see her in some other position to that we had been gazing at for nearly six months. All warp wires were cast off and the tugs stood out to sea with her to get her well off the coast, before a sea tow was spread to take her down to Gibraltar for docking.

Due to weather we had to leave our salvage launch behind, as it was impossible to recover it in that sea. The "Herakles" stayed also to recover all anchors and wires, and to bring our boat and five men that were left too. When they got back to base about a week after us they told us how the whole town had come down to the tiny water front to witness the final episode. It was October 15, 1951, and we had won. Of that gallant crew, of which I think there was none better, I would like to end by saying, that they were, every mother's son a sailor.

*This article was published in "Sea Breezes" many years ago. We have no record of when this was written but thank "Sea Breezes" for this article.*

The red haired Chief Officer was Commodore Mark Higgins, who we are sure will remember this unfortunate occasion. The master of the "Paris City" was Captain Duffy, and the Chief Engineer was Trevor Griffiths. The "Paris City" continued service with R.S.L. until 1954 when she was sold. The vessel was scrapped in 1962.

CHRISTMAS TIME

As Christmas time draws near many of us tend to look back over by-gone years, at Christmas Days. enjoyed with loved ones or shipmates, many now just memories. In doing so I counted up the Christmas days I spent at home between the years 1941 to 1982 and found only four. Most of the Christmas Days spent at sea or in foreign ports were pleasant, but there were several with incidents that stand out in my memory:-

Christmas Day 1942, M.V. "HOUSTON CITY" Captain Henry Paul / Ch.Engineer Fraser  
Passage Glasgow to Gibraltar.

On Christmas morning the ship was rolling moderately, when with an alteration of the ship's course there was an increase in the swell effect and the vessel rolled heavily, so much so that the after port Anti Torpedo Net (ATN) boom dipped its head below the surface of the sea, consequently the heel of the boom unshipped from its mounting and penetrated the after mast-house, the ATN shackle on the forward boom carried away and the net streamed aft causing a threat of entanglement in the propeller The engine was immediately stopped and the ship fell out of the convoy. The net's quick release would not operate and the steel net was eventually jettisoned by the uncomfortable job performed by the Chief Officer D.Beynon and one Apprentice (me) of climbing out the full length of the boom and releasing/cutting away the net's holding shackle. It was rather uncomfortable with the ship rolling and the outboard end of the boom threatening again to dip into the sea. The boom could not be raised due to the heel of the boom's penetration of the mast-house. Being now well astern of the convoy it was imperative to get under way, so the ship proceeded with the boom outboard at maximum speed to catch up with the convoy. A blessed Xmas morning?  
On arrival Gibraltar anchorage on the 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1942, to enable vessel to enter the port R.N. repair team boarded and freed/unshipped the after port ATN boom which was landed onto a naval lighter.

Christmas Day 1946 M.V "VANCOUVER CITY" Captain Blake Carnaffan/ Ch.Eng. A Svenson  
Passage London to Vancouver B.C (In ballast)

The M.V. "Vancouver City" and S.S. "Madras City" transited the Panama Canal on Christmas Eve, both vessels bound for Vancouver B.C. The "Vancouver City" cleared the canal about one hour ahead of the "Madras City".

At about 0100 hours 25<sup>th</sup> December, on a calm moonlight night, the "Vancouver City" was in a position approximated 12 miles to the South of Cape Mala and proceeding at full speed. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Officer on watch sighted smoke arising from the engine-room skylight. The Master was immediately called to the bridge at the same time the officer unsuccessfully endeavoured to contact the Engine-room. Within seconds the smoke had become dense and was towering above the vessel. The officer was ordered by the Master to investigate and ascertain the situation. A serious engine-room fire located in the boiler compartment had developed, the seat of which was under the Riley boiler. The vessel was still proceeding at full speed, due to the dense smoke the controls could not be reached and the engine was stopped by the emergency deck controls. Meanwhile the Master had ordered the Radio Officer to transmit a S.O.S. and two ships which was in the near vicinity answered the call, one Spanish and the other Panamanian arrived and stood by to render assistance. The ship's lifeboats were swung outboard as a precaution. The auto-alarm on the "Madras City" was not activated by our alarm signal and so she steamed serenely on, what was believed to be her navigation lights was sighted passing approximately five miles off.

The fire was eventually brought under control and extinguished and the Master when he was sure the danger was over released the two ships that were standing by. However, fire damage had been



sustained this was principally to the electric cables etc. and it was late on Christmas day before the Chief Engineer confirmed that temporary repairs were completed and he was satisfied that vessel could proceed on passage. Once electric power was restored the Cook prepared a hot meal and the Christmas dinner was postponed for Boxing Day.

The USA pop radio stations news programs announced "British Vessel "Vancouver City" bound Vancouver, B.C., on fire Christmas Day".

At Vancouver, B.C. permanent repairs were effected.

Christmas Day , 1947. M.V. "GREAT CITY" Captain H. Sharp/Chief Engineer R. Herdman  
Passage Yokohama to Vancouver, B.C. (In ballast).

The weather conditions on the passage were atrocious, with storm force Westerly winds. Christmas Day found the vessel passing some sixty miles to the Southward of the Alution Islands, it was without doubt a white one with a howling snow blizzard. The crew were looking forward to a day of leisure, especially the deck crew to a day out of the holds swinging on rope ladders endeavouring to erect shifting boards. Shortly after lunch there was a loud bang, the main engine chain had fallen off, with the engine stopped, it was immediately all engineers to the engine room. Electric power was available for engine-room use only. With the approach of darkness at 1600 hours the bulkhead dynamos (oil-lamps) were topped up and lit and the oil not under command lights lit and hoisted. The ship rolling very heavily at times, those of the crew who were not on watch or working in the engine-room, found comfort in their bunks wedged between the bulkhead and bunk board. It was near midnight before the engineers who had worked under very difficult conditions completed the repairs and the Chief Engineer was able to report to the Master that he was ready start the main engines.

This incident was prior to the fitting of a diesel generator on the ship.

O.J.Lindsay.

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### Members News.

Captain Mike Belamy writes the following:-

Dear Alec,

Thought I would write and tell you that I have recently met up with another couple of ex Reardon Smith guys. After Graig Ship Management re-placed their British Officers with foreign Nationals earlier this year I joined Wrightlink Ferries where I met up, and worked with Captain Ian Woollard and Jonathon Greenspan. During the spring and summer I was employed on the Car Ferries operating between Portsmouth and Fishborne and am at present "driving" 'Fast Cats' (High Speed Catamarans) Portsmouth and Ryde Pier in the Isle of Wright.

### New Members

John Crockett is now a member of "Shipmates" John started work in the company in 1940 he work in the Chartering Department. He became a director of Sir William Reardon Smith & Sons Ltd., Reardon Smith Line Ltd, and the Leeds Shipping Company Ltd., in 1975. He remained with the company until it went into liquidation in 1985. John now lives in Fareham, Hants.

Alec Gardner now a member of "Shipmates", Alec joined the company in the late 1950's and worked in the Superintendents Department looking after and checking the deck and engine machinery spare parts. When this section was transferred to the Purchasing Department he went over to this department. Many seafarers will have met Alec when he visited the ships to check the condition and updating the number of spares onboard when the ships were in home and European waters. He retired in the early 1980's.

We welcome aboard John Cullen who served as Chief Engineer on Reardon Smith and TMM ships for several years. John now works for the Water Board in the past few years, he lives in Liverpool.

### Obituary.

Our new member John Cullen gave me the sad news that Captain Ray Skinner crossed the bar on the 6th November and the funeral was held at the Downs Crematorium ,Bear Road, Brighton at 12 noon on the 18th November. Family flowers only but donations to Cancer Relief. We send our deepest sympathy to Ray's wife Mary and family who lives at 112 Edith Avenue North, Peacehaven, Sussex, BN10 8EB. Ray died from cancer of the lung.

I had the pleasure working with Ray when the "Welsh City" was re-engined at Aioi in 1973 he was Chief Officer and he looked after the deck repairs during that period. Ray became Deck Superintendent and we worked together for four months in Japan, during that time we had the misfortune of spending New Years Day 1974 together in Kobe staying at the Tower Hotel, Kobe. In the City all the bars and shops were closed, that, was a pretty dull day. During the period he was Superintendent he lived in Cardiff. In October 1976 He took up his first command as Master where he relieved Captain Oliver Lindsay on the m.v."Gela" in Vera Cruz, his last ship was the "Amparo". He left the company in 1987 to take up a new career in the Prison Service.

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### Travelling Hopefully.

The coloured gentleman walked into Wolverhampton High level Station and asked for a ticket to Karachil. The clerk was unable to oblige "karachi" he said, "that's Packastan isn't it?. Sorry , sir, you'll have to get your ticket at Low Low Station".

But at Low Leval staion the booking clerk explained that he couldn't issue a ticket to Karchi. "Tell you what" he said, "I'll give you a ticket to Dover. They'll be able to fix you up". But Dover officials weren't of much help to our friend. They sent him across the Channel to Ostend where a voluble gentleman issued him with a ticket to Istanbul in Turkey. From there the continental officials supplied him with a ticket to Ankara, then Badhdad and eventually to Basra wher he was give a boat ticket to Abadan. After this travelling marathon the final stage - through the Persian Golf to Karachi- was an easy trip.

After a pleasant month with his family he decided to return to England. So he marched up to the railway booking office in Karachi and asked-not very hopefully-for a ticket to Wolverhampton, England. The clerk beamed, "Yes, sir, certainly, High Level or Low Level Station".

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"Shipmaes"require stories will members please make an effort to write a story and send them to Mr.A. Osborne, 24e Heol Hir, Llanishen, Cardiff CF14 5 AE.

*The Editor*

## THE SMITH JUNIOR NAUTICAL SCHOOL

At a meeting of the Technical Instruction Committee of the Cardiff Technical College on the 18<sup>th</sup>. March 1921, it was reported to the Committee that in September 1917, Sir William Reardon Smith, on behalf of Messrs. W.R.Smith & Sons, had generously contributed the sum of £2,000 towards the establishment of special classes for boys for the purpose of studying Navigation and Seamanship to fit them for a seafaring career, and that latterly Sir William had been endeavouring to increase that sum with a view to the establishment of a Nautical School or College at Cardiff, with the result that his efforts had resulted in the previous sum of £2,000 being augmented by £18,000 making a total of £20,000 .

The Chairman of the Technical Instruction Committee stated that with such a sum the Committee could now set up a Nautical School in the Cardiff Technical College, and it would be quite easy to link it with the already existing Junior Technical School (which meets fully the needs of boys of 13 to 16 years of age whose intention it is to become engineers) and the Senior Marine Technical School, which includes the School of Navigation, the School of Marine Engineering and the School of Wireless Telegraphy. Furthermore, the three departments of the Technical College ( the Nautical School, the Marine Technical School and the Junior Technical School) will now meet fully with the needs of the youth of Cardiff wishing to take up sea life. The Committee were informed that a sub-committee consisting of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Howell, Mr. George Classy, and Mr. Frederick Jones the Vice President of the Shipping Federation of Cardiff, together with the Principal, had waited upon Sir William with reference to the gift, and that it was Sir William's desire that his family name should be associated with the School; that certain gentlemen should be appointed on the Advisory Committee of the Nautical School, and that a trust deed should be drawn up.

1. It was recommended to the Education Committee that the additional gift of £18,000 be gratefully accepted.
2. That Sir William's name be associated with the name of the Nautical School.
3. That Sir William's nominees to act on the Advisory Committee ( Mr. Frederick Jones, Mr. T. H. Monday, Mr. Douglas Smith, Mr. W. D. Gould and Capt. Compton ) be accepted.
4. That the Town Clerk be instructed to draw up a trust deed to meet the approval of Sir William.

An Advisory Committee was formed, the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Education Committee, thanked the donors for their munificence and high spirited action in opening out a new career for the youth of Cardiff, and the Chairman handed the cheque for £18,000 to the City Treasurer and Controller who was instructed to credit that sum together with the £2,000 previously received to the Nautical School Fund Account.

The Principal informed the Committee that many details with regard to the establishment of a Nautical School would require close attention, but it was probable that the Department would be recognised under the Nautical School Regulations of the Board of Trade, and it was anticipated that the B.O.T. would allow a remission of the period of sea-service required by apprentices in view of their previous attendance at the Nautical School, counting 12 months as equivalent to six months at sea. He further stated that the School would probably be started in September 1921, in fact the School opened on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. October 1921.

One only has to research the economic situation in the U.K. in general and South Wales in particular from the period 1917 to 1921 to appreciate the foresight of Sir William in initiating and being closely involved with the establishment of a nautical school during this period. During 1921 meetings were taking place in Liverpool to form the Company of Master Mariners and Sir William was very active in the interests of Master Mariners and their recognition and representation in Maritime Commerce in the U.K.

Returning to Cardiff, considerable correspondence took place between the Local Education Authority and the Board of Education to have the School recognised as a Junior Technical School. Also, with the Board of Trade, to have the School recognised as an approved School of Nautical Training for the purposes of their Regulations relating to the Examinations of Masters and Mates, whereby attendance at the School would count for a portion of sea-service required by candidates for examination for Certificates of Competency for Second Mate.

The course was of three years duration, the first two years were intended to be Preparatory in character, teaching the basic subjects required of a secondary education. The Cadet Course, given in the third year to comprise nautical subjects directly related to a career as a Deck Officer. The Cadet Course was to be similar to a scheme already agreed upon by a Conference of Navigation Schools and the Board of Trade. The Preparatory Course was under the direction of the headmaster of the existing Junior Technical School, Mr. J. A. Cheetham while the third year Cadet Course was under the direction of Capt. Thomas Johnston, the chief lecturer in the existing School of Navigation. (Capt. Johnston - 'Johnny', retired at the end of the summer term 1948. Vivid memories return of students walking up King Edward V11 Ave., when one would call out 'Johnny'. All would be galvanised into action and proceed towards the entrance of the Tech. at a pace and form to be seen to be appreciated. Little did we, of my generation, realise that this man had led all his students through periods of unemployment, war and its aftermath from the beginning in 1921 through to 1948.)

On the 1<sup>st</sup>. August 1922 the Board of Trade recognised the Smith Junior Nautical School as an approved School of Nautical Training and allowed the remission of six months of the period of sea service required to qualify for examination for a Certificate of Competency as Second Mate. Following from this very important recognition, it was decided that Course Certificates covering three years of study be awarded to successful student. The Certificates were awarded to those boys who had pursued the course of study satisfactorily for three years and had passed the various examinations.

To cater for older students attending Secondary Schools who wished to take up a seafaring career, it was decided that pupils who normally left the Secondary Schools at 15 or 16 years of age, be allowed to attend the Third Year or Cadet Course.

A fairly comprehensive syllabus was drawn up suitable for the students chosen career and it included, mathematics, sciences, navigation and nautical astronomy, business correspondence and reports, physical exercises and manual work and signalling. The physical exercises and manual work to include boating, swimming, drill and physical exercises, rope and wire work, the general handcraft of seamanship and first aid. Much of the outdoor training was conveniently given on Saturdays and half holidays, outside the school timetable. (The introduction of the 1944 Education Act, changed the curriculum to include P.E./games, swimming and boating to be within the time-table.)

The Worshipful Company of Master Mariners was formed in 1926. Sir William being one of the Founder Members of the Company. Later the title 'Honourable' was bestowed on the Company and today, the H.C.M.M. is active in the recruitment of 'Apprentices', bound to Master Mariners for the duration of their sea career. 2005 will be 'Sea Britain Year' and the H.C.M.M. headquarters ship, 'Wellington' will have 'open' days where the public can view the many artefacts gifted to the Company since its inception. In the Court can be viewed a portrait of the founder members of the Company and among them will be seen that of Sir William Reardon Smith. In 1935 the H.C.M.M. initiated the annual award of a silver medal to a cadet at the Smith Junior Nautical School who had excelled in practical proficiency and professional conduct. The first medal was awarded to George Lewis Huntley.

Many new members of staff were engaged and the school went from strength to strength. Two schools were thus housed in the College. The Smith Junior Nautical School and the Junior Technical/Commercial School which had been brought in from the 'old' technical building in Dumfries Place. Such was the arrangement until 1931 when the Junior Technical School moved out to form the nucleus of the new Cathays High School

Needless to say, the war took its toll of the old 'Smith' boys, particularly during the years 1941-2-3 when a terrific loss of life was experienced in the Merchant Service. All the 'old' boys serving at sea did yeoman and exemplary service during this period. It is a sad reflection on the Authorities of the day that a

'Memorial Board' showing the 'old boys' who had perished in the War was neither conceived or displayed in the School.

With the end of hostilities, technical progress was soon underway, more advanced courses were proposed for the Cardiff Technical College - today named 'The Bute Building' - which in turn, required room to expand. With these changing times, a new approach was required for pre-sea training. The Cardiff Authority decided to change to a one-year residential pre-sea course and obtained permission for the trust fund to be used for this purpose. Premises were found in Fairwater, Cardiff and the Reardon Smith Nautical College came into existence in 1956.

1971 brought about further changes when the Reardon Smith Nautical College was absorbed into a Department of Maritime Studies at Llandaff Technical College under the Principal, Mr. Joe Cotterell. Cdr.(E).

Gordon Kenworthy-Neale RNR was appointed the Head of the School of Maritime Studies (Wales) Thus the cycle of maritime education had made a full turn. Training under one roof as instituted in 1922.

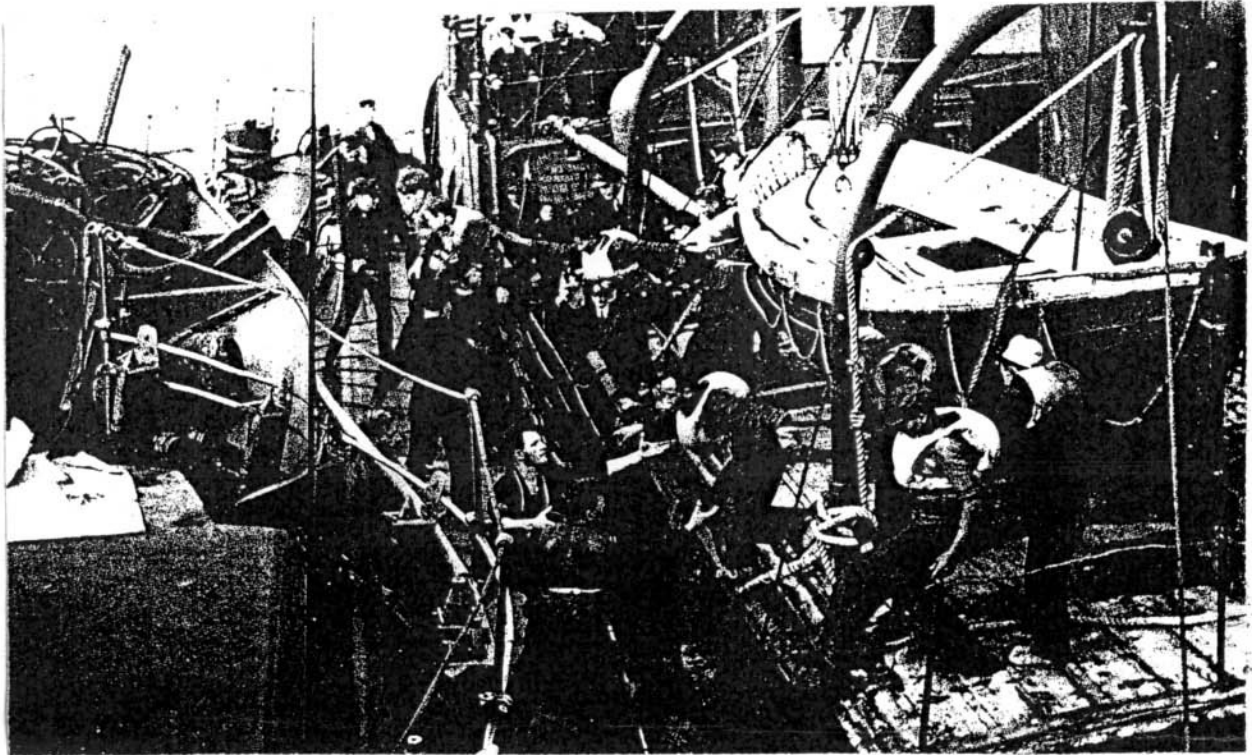
Sadly, this cycle came to an end in 1991, 70 years after the commencement of the School, when the Local Education Authority decided to close the School of Maritime Studies on economic grounds. Maritime Studies and the Reardon Smith initiative came to an end. It is only in hindsight that 'Old Boys' of the S.J.N.S. can appreciate the complete and comprehensive education given to us by the staff of the School. If we were honest, we would agree, that when we left the Cadet Year we had sufficient knowledge to sit the written papers for the Second Mate (F.G.) examination.

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When Oliver asked me to put something in print of the history of the S.J.N.S. I had to dig deep and search my archives, for I remember being given a draft of the topic by a close friend and colleague, the late Capt. David Jeffries - Capt. Jeff - of the seamanship orals fame. Nancy, his wife, has given me permission to reproduce much of this draft and I dedicate this to his memory.

Terry Rooney . October 2004  
 S.J.N.S. 1945 - 1948  
 R.S.L. 1953 - 1956

## M V "JERSEY CITY" (2)



The S.S. "Jersey City" (2) was built in 1920 by Joseph Thompson & Sons Ltd., Sunderland, for the St Just Steamship Co. Ltd., then to the Reardon Smith Line Ltd. The above photograph was sent to me by Willy Davies of Pontypool. It shows the crew of the S.S. "Jersey City" (2) being transferred to the destroyer H.M.S. "Walker". The "Jersey City" (2) was torpedoed and sank on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 1940 by U-boat U99 in position 55° 47'N 09° 18W North West of Malin. Two crew members lost their lives:

The U-boat 99 which sank "Jersey City" was launched on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 1940 and commissioned on the 18<sup>th</sup> April, the C.O. was Kapitanleutnant Otto Krestschmer. On the 17<sup>th</sup> March 1941 she was engaged in operations against convoy HX112, the submarine was on the surface when a lookout sighted H.M.S. "Walker" rescuing survivors from U-boat 100. The inexperienced O.O.W. on U99 gave the order to dive instead of using the U-boats, speed and maneuverability to escape on the surface. Once dived U99 the boat was detected by the destroyer's asdic and subject to a depth-charge attack which forced her to the surface where she was abandoned. One of the casualties was Kapitanleutnant (Ing) Schroeder the boat's engineer officer, who volunteered to re-enter the submarine and make sure she was sinking. The boat sank beneath him before he could get back out onto the casing. Kapitanleutnant Otto Krestschmer who was lost was Germany's leading U-boat ace of W.W.2. with 44 ships totaling 266,629 tons. The loss of him was a big blow to the U-boat force.

Two lovely Christmas Turkeys,  
The Christmas dinner I didn't get.



It was Christmas Time 1973 the good ship "Chiyoda" was sitting on the blocks in the Mitubishi Floating Dryock, Kobe. During the voyage when leaving a port in the Mediterranean Sea, Captain Parkhouse who was Master reported that the ship had struck the last marker buoy, this had damaged the propeller. . She steamed to the U.S.A. to load a cargo for Japan., then to Kobe the drydock. Captain Tony Crowther to command in the U.S.A.

The damage done was extensive one propeller blade had a piece missing 18" inches x 14" and the blade next to it the damage was a little smaller. The propeller shaft bronze liner was split for its full length caused by the shock of the knock The sharp edges along the split had ripped out the stern tube "Tufnel" bearing material (man made hard material substitute for Lignum vita wood). When the shaft wear down was taken it was inches not thousands of an inch. The propeller was repaired by the Nakashima Propeller Co. from Okayama, at the Mitubishi workshop. The Spare propeller shaft taken from the engineroom to the workshop to be machined and the shaft taper fitted the propeller taper.

You know that Christmas Day in Japan is a normal working day

The lunch had started, Captain Tony Crowther had carved the turkeys. We were sitting ready for the main turkey course to start when the Mitubishi Business Man came to the Saloon door and called me away from the table to say that the propeller shaft taper was ready to be fitted to the propeller and would I come to the workshop right away to examine the tapers fit.

That was the end of my 1973 Christmas dinner.

The Japanese don't start their holidays until New Year Day.

*Merry Xmas to all our readers.*

*Alec Osborne..*