
Obituary

When "Liverpool Bridge" was at Flushing on 12th June to take bunkers in preparation for her maiden voyage, an explosion occurred in the package boiler. This accident resulted in the deaths of two officers, Mr R. D. Prescott, Third Engineer Officer, and Mr M. J. Biggam, First Electrical Officer.

Mr Prescott, who was 25, joined the Company as an Engineer Cadet in 1967. The eldest of 7 children, he was unmarried and lived with his parents in Huyton. Mr Biggam, who was 26, joined the Company in 1973, having previously served with Andrew Weir & Co. Mr Biggam was a married man with 2 children, and lived in Glasgow.



We must also sadly record the deaths of the following:

Mr G. E. Burgoyne: Having joined the Company in 1926, Mr Burgoyne served on both passenger and troop ships. He was promoted to Chief Steward in 1947, and Purser/Chief Steward two years later. He retired in 1956.

Mr J. B. Corlett: Joining the Company in 1955 as a Troop Officer, Mr Corlett was employed as a Relieving Officer from 1960 until his retirement in 1968.

Captain R. S. Evans: Joining as Third Officer in 1920, Captain Evans served in all the Company's vessels prior to his promotion to Master in 1935. He came ashore in 1953 and served as Defence Officer for a short time before his retirement.

Captain D. C. Monteith: Captain Monteith entered the Company as Third Officer in 1950, and was promoted to Master in 1966. Shortly after appointment to his first command, m.v. "Lancashire", he was landed sick and on returning to duty he was obliged to serve as Relieving Master. Owing to continuing ill health, he was unable to remain at sea, and in 1970 he joined the office staff as assistant to the Marine Superintendent.

Mr R. W. Pedder: Having served for 10 years as Assistant Purser, Mr Pedder was promoted Purser in 1929. His last appointment was to m.v. "Oxfordshire", which he joined when she was commissioned in 1957, and he remained with her until his retirement in 1962, which coincided with the termination of sea trooping.

Sealife

In the early part of 1975, the General Council of British Shipping decided to undertake an examination of the problems associated with seafaring and the seafarer's life. And so the Sealife project came into existence. Controlled by a steering group whose membership includes representatives of each of the maritime unions, of the owners, and of the Department of Trade, its aim is quite simply stated: to see what can be done to improve life at sea, with a view to reducing the high turnover of personnel which has become increasingly evident in recent years.

Although Sealife is now well into its second year, it is only recently that the Company has become directly involved in it. Over the next twelve months or so, various experiments will be carried out on a selected vessel, "Dart Atlantic", under the guidance of Captain Butler. These experiments will be related particularly to the problems of the society onboard ship, of job satisfaction, and of seagoing as a career.

The first of these is primarily concerned with the achievement of the greatest possible harmony in what is essentially a very small close-knit community, from which it is impossible to escape at will. With modern pressures of competition, of reduced manning, and of new patterns of trade which reduce time in port to the minimum, the establishment of a happy and successful society onboard becomes increasingly difficult. Indeed, the surprising thing is perhaps how often this is achieved. Paradoxically, the problem is aggravated by shorter periods of service, which may have an unsettling influence, and result in individuals identifying less readily with the ship and its society.

Although it was once jargon, the term "job satisfaction" is now very generally used. It implies the achievement of pleasure and a sense of pride and fulfilment from the work that has to be done, whatever it may be.

Perhaps the hardest of the three to come to grips with is the problem of the seagoing career, the need to offer the sort of career which applicants would like to achieve. One of the greatest problems in the shipping industry, and this is by no means confined to British shipping, has been to make a career at sea competitive in all respects with life ashore. The figures for manpower wastage which are published from time to time make it quite clear how far we have to go in this regard.

At the moment the whole of the industry's recruitment, training and promotion process suggests that everyone goes to sea for life. This we know is not the case, and there is no