

# Blue Funnel Line/Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd, East Indian Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd and other Singapore-based feeder lines

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\*\*\*May be cited with acknowledgement to [www.oldchinaships.com](http://www.oldchinaships.com)\*\*\*

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## **A. Overview**

From 1866 Alfred and Philip Holt's Ocean Steam Ship Company (OSSC) relied upon its agents in the Far East to accumulate return cargoes for its homeward freight line. That role was carried out in China by Butterfield & Swire and in Singapore by the partnership of Walter Mansfield & Co. From 1873 Butterfield & Swire managed a line of steamer on the Yangtse and from 1874 also on the China Coast. Mansfields, however, were able to draw cargo from the extensive Singapore-based network of the Nederlandsche Indische Stoomvaart Maatschappij (NISM), a Dutch-flag affiliate of the British India S.N. Co. Homeward loadings from Singapore were still modest.

Circumstances began to change in the late-1870s as Dutch firms established plantations in the fertile highlands of what the Dutch referred to as the East Coast of Sumatra, then part of the sultanate of Deli, now the Indonesian province of North Sumatra. This. From the main town of Medan, trade passed through the river port of Labuan [Port] Deli, later better known as Belawan (Deli). The highlands were found to be particularly suited to the cultivation of high-quality leaf tobacco for the production of cigars and this promised to be a high-rated tweendeck cargo for Holt steamers to top off in Singapore. To better control this valuable trade, Holts built *Ganymede* (1879) and the tug-tender *Ascanius* (1880) and in 1881 added *Mercury*, all small steamers able to pass up river to Labuan Deli and tranship the leaf in Singapore or Penang. Ownership was vested in OSSC in Liverpool but management was delegated to Mansfields.

From 1882 with *Hecuba* a second venture became the Singapore-Bangkok trade, hitherto served mainly by Anglo-Chinese ships based in Singapore. Between 1885 and 1890 four slightly larger ships were delivered by Potter & Sons of Liverpool, *Hecate*, *Medusa*, *Hydra* and *Gorgon*. Majority ownership was held by OSSC with minor shares held by Liverpool Manager Albert Crompton, Mansfield & Co. and the latter's Managing Partner, Theodore Cornelis Bogaardt, hitherto partner and branch manager in Penang, who in mid-1883 became Senior Partner in Singapore on the departure for England of George Mansfield.

In the latter half of the 1880s events began to move very quickly in Singapore. In September 1886 Bogaardt sold up his house and possessions in Singapore (ST, 3/9/86), presumably to go back to Europe for an extended time. In mid-1886 Norddeutscher Lloyd (NDL) of Bremen opened a subsidised mail line from Germany to the Far East and in due course put its own feeder, the rebuilt *Schwalbe* (1040/83), onto the Deli line, later joined by the smaller *Sumatra* (540/89). In mid-1888 NISM's tender for a new interisland mail contract in the Netherlands Indies was rejected in favour of a higher bid from the principals of the two Dutch homeward lines SMN and Rotterdamsche Lloyd. The Kon. Paketvaart Mij (KPM), an affiliate of these two lines, was set up to carry out the contract. Under threat of being squeezed by subsidised Dutch and German competitors, Holts needed to shore up their position in Singapore.



SCHWALBE at Dairen c.1912 as NANTO MARU (Bristol, Warren Swire colln Sw7-057).

In T.C. Bogaardt, Holts had a very capable agent able to do just that. At the end of 1883 Bogaardt had already acquired the small coasting steamer *Pyah Pekhet* (1875) with half the purchase price being put up by Holts who, according to Hyde (1957: 52-53) declined to take on the vessel on their own account. Now with further financial support from Holts, Bogaardt proceeded to acquire more secondhand tonnage that he deployed to supplement *Pyah Pekhet* to Malacca and Klang on the West Coast of Malaya (*Will-o'-the-Wisp*, then the newbuilt *Sappho* (1887) and open up new lines to Pontianak, West Borneo (*Ban Whatt Hin*), North Borneo (*Banjermassin*, *Ranee*) and as far as the Celebes and Moluccas (*Normanby*), and even to Palembang (the little *Mercury*). In January 1891 after the termination of the

NISM services, he bought their *Maha Vajirunhis* to compete with the KPM on the Singapore-Atjeh-Padang (West Sumatra) line and *Devonhurst* and *Kongsee* for the Celebes and Moluccas line. In 1890 the Holt brothers decided to enter the Singapore-Western Australia line as far as Fremantle. This line had been operated by the West Australian S.N. Co. with *Australind* (1886) under the management of C. Bethell & Co. and Trinder, Anderson & Co. of London. It became a joint venture in 1890 when Holts contributed the specially designed steamer SALADIN, which came into service in September 1890.

As Bogaardt's fleet grew rapidly, some consolidation was necessary. On 20 January 1890 Straits S.S. Co. was incorporated in Singapore as a separate joint venture between Mansfields and three Chinese shipowners to operate the Singapore-Malacca-Klang-Penang line. Mansfields contributed *Will-o'-the-Wisp* and *Sappho*.

As of mid-January 1891, Mansfield's modest page-1 advertisement for OSSC included "Lines in operation from Singapore", namely to Bangkok every three days by *Hecate*, *Hecuba*, *Hydra*, *Gorgon* and *Medusa*, to Deli every three days by *Calypso*, *Hebe* and *Ganymede*, to North Borneo weekly [*Ranee* and *Banjermassin*] and to Saigon fortnightly by *Flintshire*. The addition after refit of the three ex-NISM ships allowed the addition of services to Atjeh and Padang (*Maha Vajirunhis*) and to Java (Surabaya) and eastern Indonesia as far as Timor via Surabaya, Bali, Ampenan, and Macassar (*Devonhurst*, *Kongsee* and later also *Flintshire*), while *Normanby* provided six-weekly sailings beyond Labuan and Sandakan to Menado and Gorontalo in the North Celebes and Ternate in the North Moluccas. *Ban Whatt Hin*, however, ran under Straits SS auspices to Billiton and Pontianak and would soon be joined by *Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

The perceived intrusion of OSSC/Mansfields into the Dutch sphere of the archipelago led to a vigorous response from the Opten Noort, local manager of the KPM, in the competition for transshipment cargo. The most decisive action was taken to defend the Padang trade but also in eastern Indonesia. Within a few months Holts suspended sailings to Timor and turned its ships around more quickly in Makassar, leading the KPM to open its own line from Makassar to Singapore.

In November 1891 George and Philip Holt with Albert Crompton, Bogaardt and his partner in Mansfields, Arthur (A.P.) Adams, formed East Indian Ocean Steam Ship Co. (EIOSSC), registered in Liverpool, to take over most of the rest of the Singapore-based fleet apart from Straits S.S. and the W.A. line. Apparently in 1893 Holts considered making the WA line a separate entity but this idea was not taken up (Hyde, 1957: 64n3). *Sultan* (1894) was delivered to Holts and the line remained a joint venture until Holts/Ocean took it over completely in 1936.

Nevertheless, despite a promising beginning, Holts' Singapore ventures had mixed fortunes. Straits S.S. eventually thrived, the Deli steamers continued to do well and the W.A. line became a modest success. In the face of stiff competition from both the KPM and NDL, however, EIOSSC struggled. Eventually, in mid-April 1899, the British community in Singapore was stunned by the announcement that Holts had concluded negotiations to sell the EIOSSC fleet indirectly to NDL in return for guaranteed transshipment rights, thereby relieving Ocean of the burden of management and any operating losses. The background detail of the negotiations are unknown because all the records in Liverpool and in

Singapore were destroyed during World War II.

Eleven ships were sold in the first instance to a local German syndicate led by A.O. Meyer of Behn, Meyer & Co., who acted as NDL agents in Singapore, rather like Mansfields and Holts/Ocean. At the time, *Hecate*, *Centaur*, *Charon*, *Hydra*, *Gorgon*, *Cerberus* and *Medusa* were running to Bangkok, *Hecuba* and *Ranee* to North Borneo, *Deucalion* to HK/Amoy and *Banjermassin* was laid up. Transfer to Behn Meyer agency took place in May but some ships kept their British masters and names for a few more weeks. In January 1900 all 11 vessels were transferred across to NDL with registry in Bremen. Excluded from the deal were the profitable Deli steamers, the W.A. steamers, the vintage *Memnon* (1861) and three of the four 'coolie' ships in the Straits-South China trade (*Bellepheron*, *Jason* and *Telemachus* but not *Deucalion*). NDL sold off most of the former EIOSSC steamers as soon as their own newbuilt tonnage became available but the agreement with Holts held firm until the NDL fleet was either seized or interned at the outbreak of World War I in August 1914.

Although the history of OSSC has been well recorded by Hyde (1957) and later by Falkus (1990), that of the Dutch subsidiary NSMO by de Boer (1997), of Straits Steam Ship by Tregonning (1967) and Laxon (2004), the brief corporate history of EIOSSC a 'black box' and its small feeder ships in Southeast Asia have been all but forgotten without even photographs to identify what they looked like. The following sections assemble some detail from a variety of sources.

The sections below are ordered as B. Deli steamers (OSSC), C. EIOSSC steamers (newbuilds), D. EIOSSC precursor and secondhand steamers, E. Singapore-Fremantle Line (OSSC), and F. West Australian S.N. Co. Ltd steamers. The logic is not chronological but is intended more clearly to show the evolution in design of Holts' newbuilt local steamers as opposed to the medley of secondhand acquisitions.

## Sources

Framework sources are F.E. Hyde, *Blue Funnel: A History of Alfred Holt & Company of Liverpool, 1865-1914* (1957) and later by Malcolm Falkus, *The Blue Funnel Legend: A History of the Ocean Steam Ship Company, 1865-1973* (1990), G.J. de Boer, *De Nederlandse Blauwpijpers* (1997), K.G. Tregonning, *Home Port Singapore* (1967) and W.A. Laxon, *The Straits Steamship Fleets* (2004). For further detail we have drawn heavily on contemporary newspapers available online through Trove (Australia), The National Library of Singapore (eresources.nlb.gov.sg) and ProQuest, shipping registers (Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan), also records in the KPM archive in the Alg. Rijksarchief and WWII merchant shipping records in the British National Archive in the Board of Trade BT-389 series. Correction of ship details has been greatly assisted by the annual registers and personal advice of Bill Schell, the Shigetoshi Kizu database, and the websites *clydeships.co.uk*, *miramarshipindex.nz* and *marhisdata.nl*.

## B. Deli feeder lines (Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd)

Holt's original feeder line in Southeast Asia commenced in December 1879 with *Ganymede* to tranship Deli tobacco to the main line steamers at Singapore. Then known as the East Coast of Sumatra (now the Indonesian province of North Sumatra), this district had recently been brought under Dutch rule

and the fertile volcanic highlands behind the town of Medan (Deli) had been found ideal for high-quality tobacco that could compete with Philippine and Cuban leaf in the making of cigars. The bundles of dried leaf also made a high-rated 'tween-deck cargo for Blue Funnel (Ocean S.S. Co.) steamers on the homeward voyage from China and Alfred Holt sought to capture as much of the business as possible. Until the port of Belawan was completed in 1917, there was no deepwater harbour at Deli so small feeder ships were needed to tranship the cargo at Penang and Singapore. Ocean S.S. employed such feeders until 1925, when *Circe*, *Medusa* and *Ayuthia* were transferred to the Singapore-based Straits S.S. (in which Holts now held a controlling interest together with their longstanding local agents W. Mansfield & Co. Ltd).

**GANYMEDE** (1879-00) 405/79-9 (i.s.s., 166.5 x 28.0', inv. 1cy/80hp)

Built by Scott & Co., Greenock (#189) for A. Holt & Co. (Ocean S.S. Co.), Liverpool (#96/1879), 9/10/79 sailed Liverpool for Singapore (5/12) and 10/12/79 commenced weekly line Singapore-Deli line. 1892 t/f to NSM 'Oceaan', Amsterdam and by 12/92 in use as cased oil carrier Langkat-Singapore. 4/97 reg. at Singapore to EIOSSC, then t/f to Liverpool. 31/3/02 chartered to Straits S.S. for Singapore-Malacca-Port Swettenham line. 1/5/04 laid up at Singapore. 29/9/04 adv. for sale by W. Mansfield & Co. at Tanjong Pagar (275 dwt, 250 deck pass., 8.5-9k at 10 tpd) but no buyer. De Boer rep. in use as hulk at Belawan Deli but also said to have had engines removed and conv. to tobacco storage hulk for use at Penang. 1/11/09 advert. by W. Mansfield & Co. for sale as lies at Penang, now as 'hulk...fitted with galvanised iron roof...capacity 1,066 tons', then 23/12 for auction sale 29/12/09 of hulk and moorings. SFP (13/8/10) rep. sold to Simons & Co. of Renfrew and towed to Tongkah, SW Thailand, for use as accommodation, store and workshop for new steam tin dredgers. NFI.

**FOR SALE**  
**THE IRON SCREW STEAMER**  
**GANYMEDE,**  
 405 tons gross, 236 tons nett register. Built by Scott & Co., Greenock 1879. Engine one Inverted single cylinder diameter 21 ins. by 34 ins. stroke. Carries about 275 tons deadweight or 24,480 cubic ft. and steams 8½ to 9 knots on about 10 tons Japan Coal per day. Draft 9½ ft. loaded. Has two derricks capable of lifting 10 & 3 tons respectively and accommodation for a few First class passengers on Awning deck. Measures for about 250 deck passengers. Dimensions Length 166 ft., Breadth 28 ft., Depth 19.8 ft.  
 Now lying alongside Hulks at Tanjong Pagar.  
 The undersigned are open for offers.  
**W. MANSFIELD & Co., Ltd.**  
 Agents The Ocean Steam Ship Coy., Ltd.  
 Sept 29

**FOR SALE.**  
**HULK "GANYMEDE"**  
 as she now lies in Penang Harbour. Built of Iron in 1879. Fitted with Galvanized Iron Roof. Total capacity of Holds and Tween Decks approximately 1,066 tons of 40 c. ft. Also moorings, consisting of two Anchors, bridle cable and buoy. For further particulars, apply  
**W. MANSFIELD & CO., LTD.**  
 u2202

Advertisements for sale of GANYMEDE, May and November 1904 (Straits Times).

**ASCANIUS** (1880-93) 107/80 (i.s. cr. tug 74 x 18.1', 1cy/25hp)

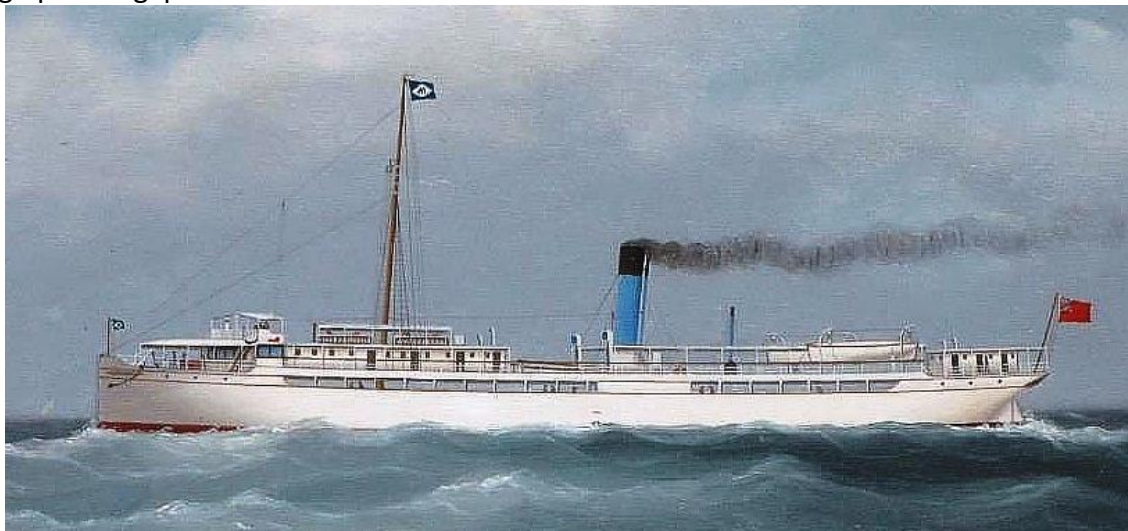
Built by Cochrane & Co., Birkenhead for OSSC, Liverpool for Penang-Langkat trade ('The Flying Coconut'). 20/2/93 arrived Singapore and laid up. Late 1893 reg. at Singapore to The Borneo Co. Ltd,

London, 12/93-1/94 in local trade. 3/2/94 cleared Singapore for Saigon. 10/94 reg. closed on sale to French at Saigon. NFI.

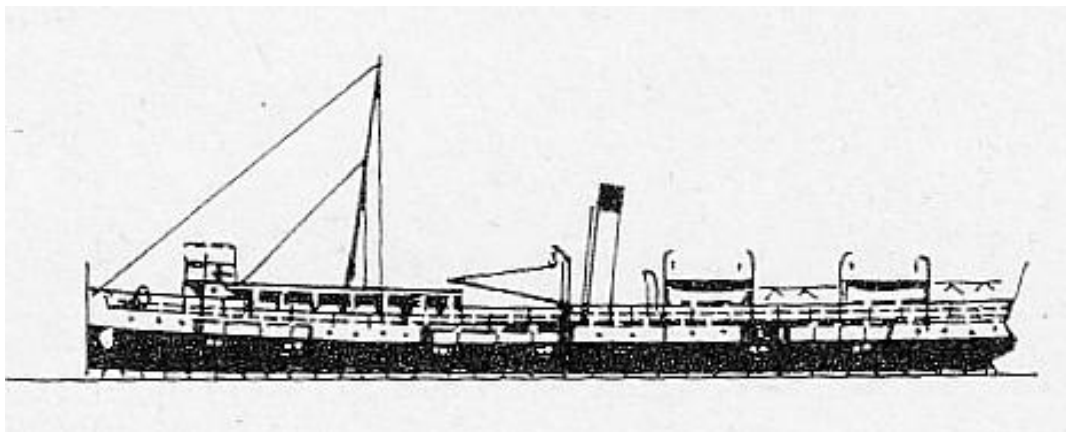
**FANTEE** (1881-95) 167/79-12L (i.2-s.s, 120 x 18', 2 x 2cyl. surface-condensing engines/50nhp/8k) A. Stephen & Sons, Glasgow (#235) for Alex. Miller & Sons but not delivered. 22/7/81 initial reg. to OSSC (Liverpool #90/1881) and sent out for Penang-Langkai trade. 2/87 t/f to Singapore-Malacca-Linggi line. 25/4/90 arrived from Palembang and laid up. 8/90 to Cossack, WA for service as steam lighter for new Singapore-WA line. 21/3/92 returned to Singapore. 29/7/92 advert. for sale by auction but evidently no sale, instead chartered to Straits Tdg Co. and stationed at Pulau Brani as freshwater hulk for tin smelter [ST, Tregonning: 16]. 7/6/94 advertised for sale by public auction. 10/94 on charter to H.J. Martyn for Penang-Langkai trade. Early 1895 reg. at Singapore to Wm Kinsey (Pahang Exploration & Devt Co. Ltd), 5/95 Jackson Millar (engineer) 32/64 and began trading Singapore-Kemaman and Kuantan (loading tin for PEDC). After Pahang rebellion, 8/11/95 adv. By W. Kinsey 'for sale or charter'. 1/1/96 began trading Singapore-Bagan on charter to Chin Ah Pat. 9/96 resumed trading to E. Coast of Malaya. 12/6/99 after Kinsey bankrupt 32/64 auctioned to Riley, Hargreaves & Co. Ltd, Singapore for \$1,900 for dismantling. 20/11/99 register closed.

**MERCURY** (1881-90) 303/72 (i.s.s., 138.6 x 21.7', C2cy/70rhp by J. Taylor & Co., Birkenhead) Built by Bowdler, Chaffer & Co., Liverpool (#86) for OSSC, possibly for use at Liverpool, Buxton suggests at Suez. 12/6/82 arrived Singapore from Liverpool (29/4) to enter Singapore-Deli trade. Q2/1890 sold to Tanjong Pagar Dock Co. Ltd (32) & New Harbour Dock Co. Ltd (32), Singapore. 2/00 TPDC full owner. 1904 new boilers (now 271 grt). 11/13 to Singapore Harbour Board. 3/19 register closed, presume on breaking up.

**HEBE** (1885-10) 545/85-10 (i.s.s., 190.0 x 30.6', C2cy/90rhp) Built by Scott & Co., Greenock (#243) for OSSC, Liverpool. 9/10 sold to R.S. Bainbridge (24), J.T. Wood (20), Ong Hoon Beng (13) and R.C. Willis (7), Singapore. 12/12 sold to Straits S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore. 12/21 laid up. 3/22 advertised for sale for breaking up. 5/22 register closed on sale to Hock Kee Hoe for breaking up at Singapore.



CALYPSO, HEBE and SAPPHO as built (Chinese school painting).



CALYPSO and HEBE as they may have appeared later in their careers (Duncan Haws).

**SAPPHO** (1887-90) 532/87-10 (i.s.s., 190.0 x 30.6', C2cy/90rhp)

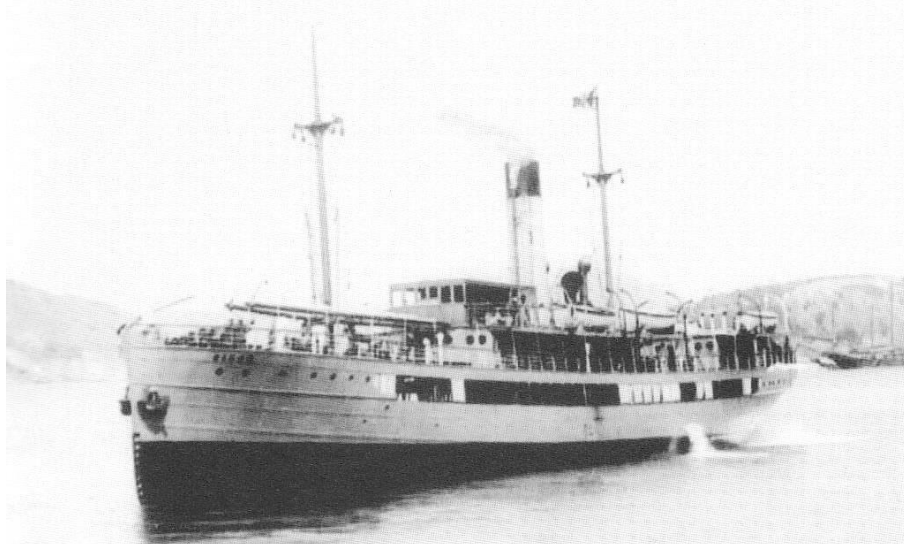
Built by Scott & Co., Greenock (#253) for OSSC. 8/90 sold to Straits S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore for Singapore-Penang trade. 3/23 sold to Menam Pilots' Assocn, Bangkok for service at Menam/Chao Phya bar. 1928 sold for breaking up.

**CALYPSO** (1889-12) 544/89-5 (i.s.s., 190.0 x 30.6', C2cy/90rhp)

Built by Scott & Co., Greenock (#265) for OSSC, Liverpool (#43/1889), 11/5 sailed Greenock and 7/10 arrived Singapore via Jeddah and Penang with 424 returning pilgrims. 1/91 t/f to EIOSSC. 6/12 sold to Straits S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore. 11/25 sold to Chop Kuah Soon Yew for breaking up at Singapore.

**CIRCE** (1912-46) 778/12-6 (s.s.s, 195.4 x 31.6', T3cy/95nhp)

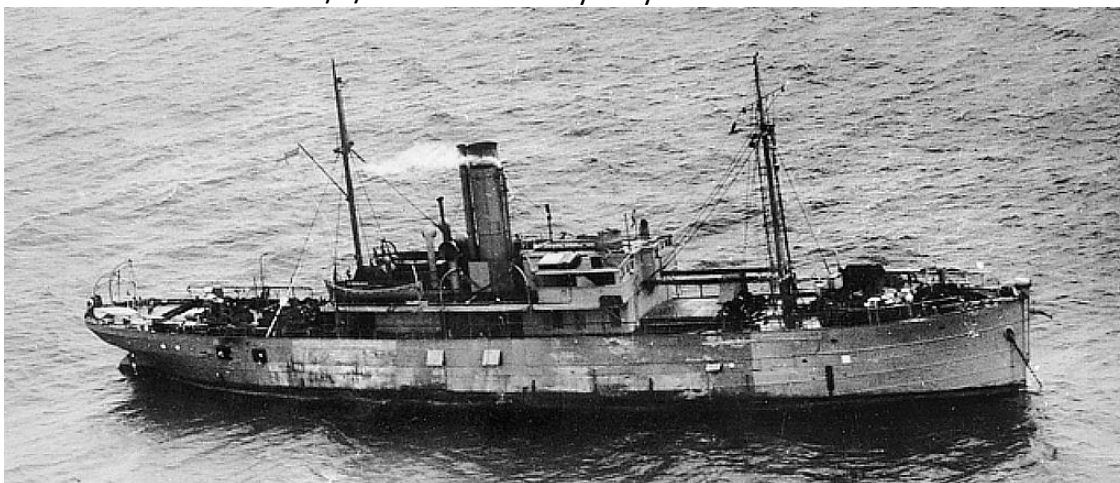
Built by Taikoo D. & E. Co. of HK Ltd (#125) for A. Holt & Co. for Singapore-Belawan line. 13/8 reg. at HK. 2/13 reg. t/f to Liverpool. 3/25 t/f to Straits S.S. Co. Ltd and reg. t/f to Singapore. 8/25 switched to Singapore-Kelantan line. 9/39 attached to China Command as minesweeper as HMS CIRCE. c.20/2/42 with *Medusa* sailed Tanjung Priok (Batavia) via Cilacap to Fremantle. 6/7/42 comm. by RAN as HMAS MEDEA. 7/10/46 at Sydney reverted to owners as CIRCE. 1947 sold for dismantling at Drummoyne Shipyards, SMH 15/8/47 advertised teak decking and furniture for sale. 20/1/48 scuttled off Sydney.



CIRCE (Bill Laxon).

**MEDUSA** (1913=46) 793/13-12 (s.s.s, 195.4 x 31.6', T3cy/97nhp)

Built by Taikoo D. & E. Co. of HK Ltd (#142) for A Holt & Co. for the Singapore-Belawan line. 12/13 reg. at HK, then t/f to Liverpool. 3/25 sold to Straits S.S. Co. Ltd and reg. t/f to Singapore. 6/25 t/f to Port Swettenham line. 1933-39 on Kelantan line. 9/39 attached to China Command as minesweeper as HMS MEDUSA. c.20/2/42 with *Circe* sailed Tanjung Priok (Batavia) via Cilacap to Fremantle. 6/7/42 comm. by RAN as HMAS MEDEA. 6/7/42 comm. by RAN as HMAS MERCEDES. 7/10/46 at Sydney reverted to owners as MEDUSA. 1947 sold for dismantling at Drummoyne Shipyards, SMH 15/8/47 advertised teak decking and furniture for sale. 23/1/48 scuttled off Sydney.



HMAS MERCEDES ex MEDUSA stripped back as RAN minesweeper (AWM301048).

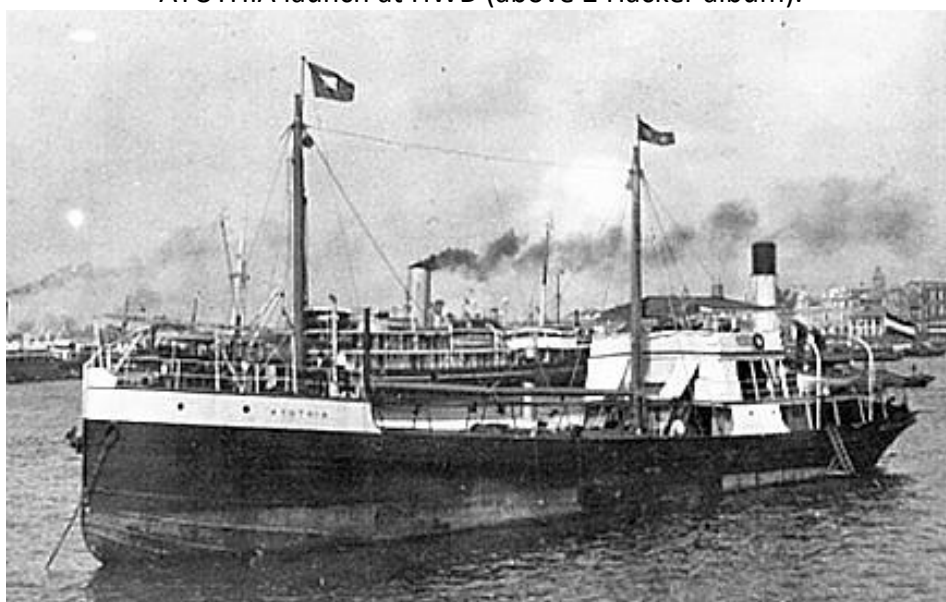
**AYUTHIA** 463/08-11 (2-sc.s., 152.5 x 29.0', 2 x 3cy/43nhp)

Built by Hongkong & Whampoa Dock Co. Ltd, Hong Kong for NDL as steam lighter for service at Bangkok but 19/11 sailed HK for Singapore, where used mainly Singapore/Penang-N. Sumatra. 8/14 sheltered in Sumatra in neutral NEI. 1919 taken over by The Shipping Controller, London. 3/21 to OSSC for Singapore-Belawan line. 5/25 sold to Straits S.S. Co. Ltd. 9/36 sold to Chew Eng Chuan, Singapore for breaking up. [Laxon, Singapore Register]





AYUTHIA launch at HWD (above 2 Hacker album).



AYUTHIA at Singapore in Holt colours ([www.delcampe.net](http://www.delcampe.net)).

### **C. East Indian Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd (1891-1899)**

On 1 January 1891, under a new contract, the Dutch-owned Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij (KPM) took over the contractual mail lines in the Netherlands Indies that had been operated since 1865 by the Netherlands Indies S.N. Co. Ltd, an affiliate of the British India S.N. Co. Ltd of London. The KPM's two main principals were the Dutch ocean lines Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland and Rotterdam Lloyd, Holt's rivals in the homeward trade. Holts/Ocean responded in August 1891 by forming the Dutch subsidiary Stoomvaart Maatschappij 'Oceaan' to compete in the Netherlands Indies-Europe trade, then in November forming the East Indian Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd (EIOSSC) to own and manage the

assorted fleet that their local agent J.C. Bogaardt of Mansfield & Co. had cobbled together to provide local feeder lines to/from Singapore and Penang. The five best ships, *Hecuba* (1882), *Hecate* (1885), *Medusa* (1886), *Hydra* (1888) and *Gorgon*, all compound-engined steamers of of around 1,000-grt, had been newly built for OSSC for the Bangkok line, which transhipped import cargo from Singapore and returned with rice, teak and cattle. *Gorgon* sometimes brought rice from Saigon. In the mid-1890s three larger 3-hatch freighters were delivered by Workman Clark of Belfast for the Bangkok rice trade, the 1,800-grt *Cerberus* (1894), then the slightly larger 1,900-grt *Centaur* (1895) and *Charon* (1896).

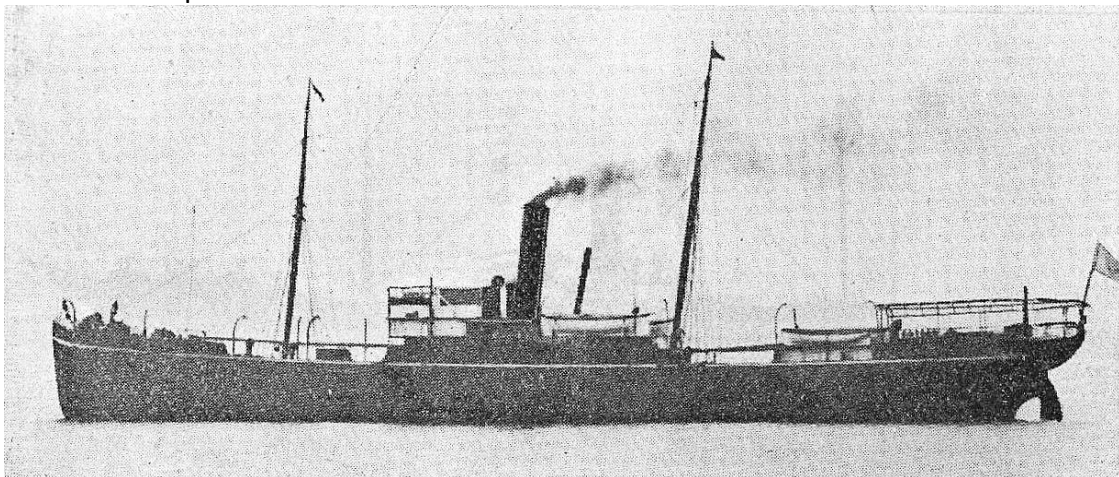
### Fleet list (vessels built for OSSC/EIOSSC)

**HECUBA** (1882-99) 918/82-1L (i.s.s., 237.4 x 31.5', C2cy/106nhp)

Built by Scott & Co., Greenock (#208) for £22,000 for OSSC Liverpool (46/64) with W. Mansfield and T.C. Bogaardt (18/64), 15/3 sailed Glasgow for Singapore (25/4), 5/82 in service to Bangkok. 1892 t/f to EIOSSC. 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. Flag) r. KUDAT. 1/00 t/f to NDL, Bremen. 1905 sold to Hokuriku Kisen Goshi K., Osaka r. MATSUSHIMA MARU (reg. Hakodate). 1911 sold to Yokichi Fujiyama, Otaru (reg. Nishinomiya). 12/3/15 o/v Otaru-Fushiki (coal) sank off Sado Island.

**HECATE** (1885-99) 968/85-7L (i.s.s., 235.9 x 33.3', C2cy/106nhp by Fawcett, Preston & Co. Ltd, Lpl)

Built by W.H. Potter & Sons, Liverpool (#123) for £15,750 for OSSC (33/64) with W. Mansfield and T.C. Bogaardt. 1892 t/f to EIOSSC. 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. flag) r. PATANI. 1/00 t/f to NDL, Bremen. 1904 sold to Ikuta Shokai K.K., Kobe r. IKUTA MARU No.2. 1907 sold to Hokuyo Kisen K.K., Nanao r. HOKUYO MARU (997gt). 1916 sold to Yamamoto Atuzo, Nanao. 24/1/21 to 12/11/21 req. as transport. 24/10/22 sank in collision with *Okinawa Maru* at entrance to Kagoshima, salvaged and broken up.

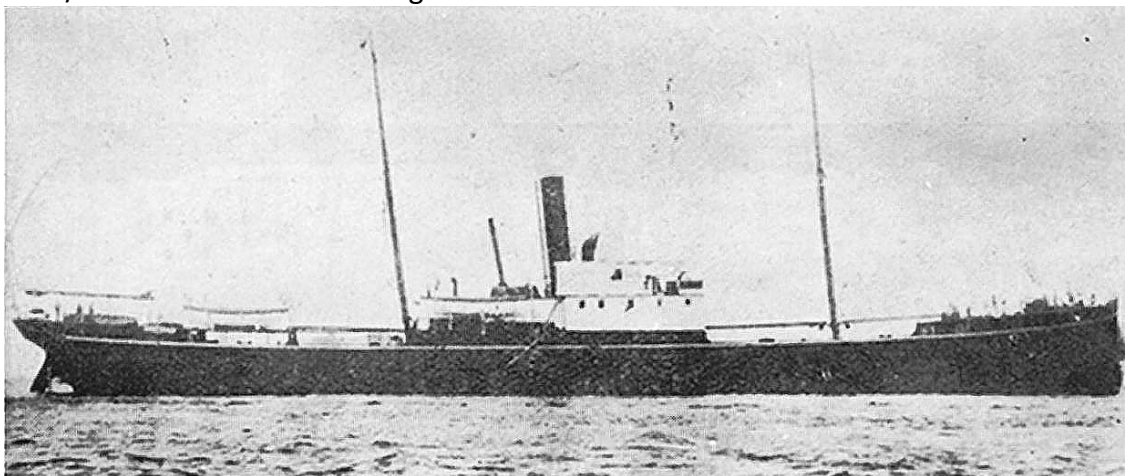


HECATE as HOKUYO MARU (1916 Japan Steamships Register).

**MEDUSA** (1886-99) 967/86-1 (s.s.s., 235.8 x 33.4', C2cy/106nhp by Fawcett, Preston & Co. Ltd, Lpl)

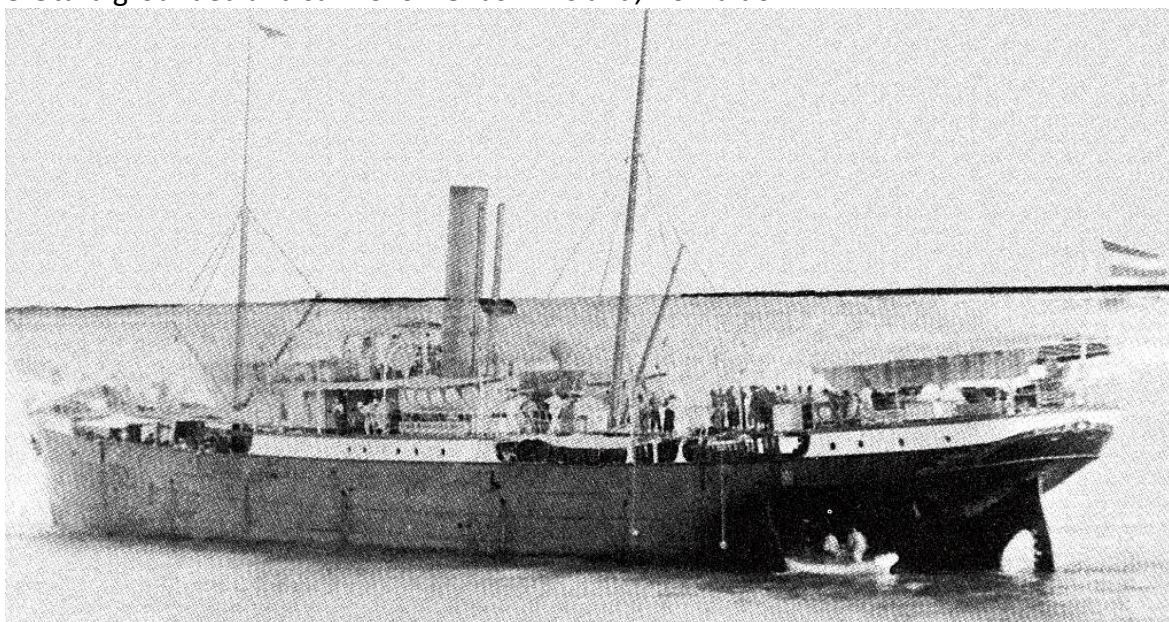
Built by W.H. Potter & Sons, Liverpool (#126) for £15,500 for OSSC (33/64), GTM 15/64, TCB 8/64, AC 8/64. 1892 t/f to EIOSSC. 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. flag) r.

KELANTAN. 1/00 t/f to NDL, Bremen. 1905 sold to Yonezo Kaji, Kobe r. JINGI MARU No. 3 (991gt). 1913 sold to Yokichi Fujiyama, Otaru. 1920 t/f to Fujiyama Kaiun K.K., Otaru. 27/8/20 wrecked on W. coast of Kamchatka o/v from Hakodate to fishing stations.



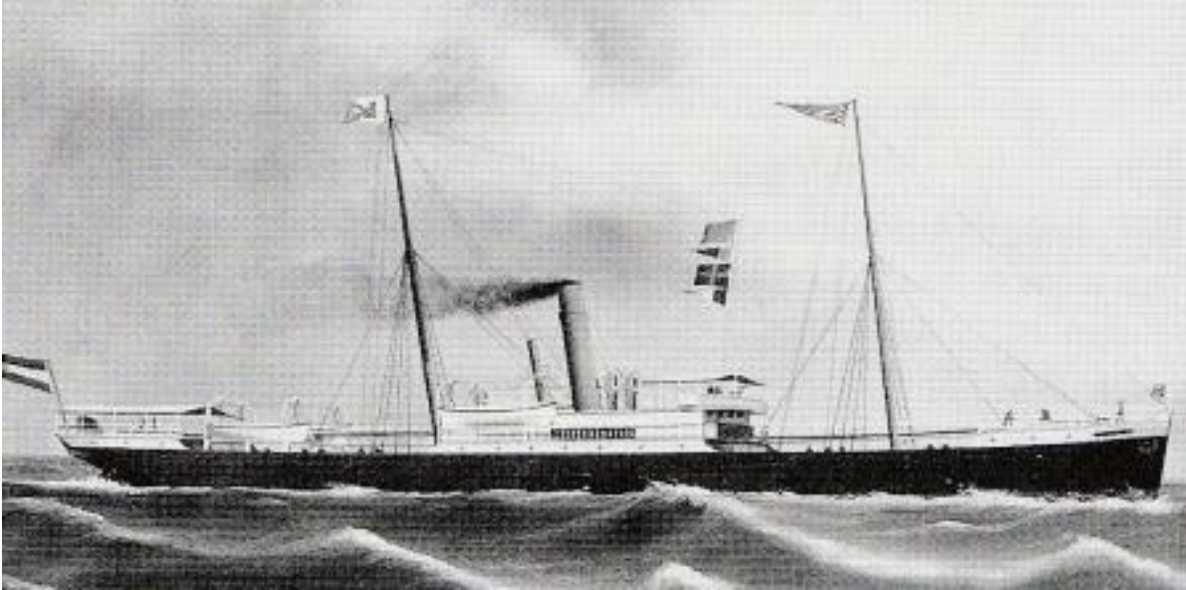
MEDUSA as JINGI MARU No. 3 (1916 Japan Steamships Register).

**HYDRA** (1888-99) 990/88-9 (i.s.s., 237.3 x 34.2', T3cy/117nhp by D. Rollo & Sons, Liverpool) Built by W.H. Potter & Sons, Liverpool (#137) £18,123 for OSSC, Liverpool (36/64), GTM 10/64, TCB 10/64, AC 8/64. 1892 t/f to EIOSSC. 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. flag) r. KEDAH. 1/00 t/f to NDL, Bremen. 1905 sold to Tatsuma Shokai K.K., Osaka (1906 reg. Naruo) r. SEKKAI MARU No.2 for mainline domestic coastal service Shinagawa-Nagoya-Osaka-Kobe-Moji. 9/06 and 12/06 voyages Kobe-Ryojun. 24/6/09 bottom damage when grounded in fog off Shirohane village near Omaezaki o/v Nagoya-Shinagawa. 19/1/11 t/f to Tatsuma Kisen G.K., Nishinomiya. 4/3/14 on fire o/v Tientsin-Yingkow with 1500 laborers, 8/3 arr. Yingkow with 2 dead, 4 critical. 5/14 sold to Yokichi Fujiyama, Otaru (reg. Nishinomiya), 1915 r. KAISHIN MARU. 1917 reg. Onahama. 26-28/7/18 o/v Tushike-Otaru grounded and sank S. off Okushiri Island, Hokkaido.



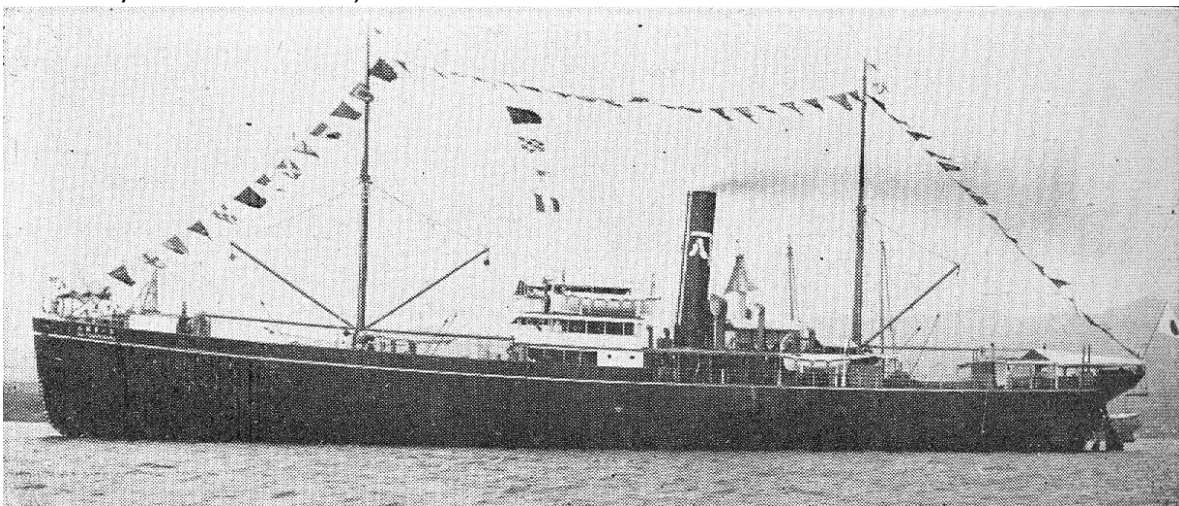
HYDRA as NDL's KEDAH (Hapag-Lloyd AG/Arnold Kludas).

**GORGON** (1894-99) 986/90 (i.s.s., 235.7 x 34.2', C2cy/106nhp by Fawcett, Preston & Co. Ltd, L'pool)  
 Built by W.H. Potter & Sons, Liverpool (#146) for OSSC. 8/8/90 arrived Singapore via Le Havre. 1892 t/f  
 to EIOSSC. 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. flag) r. TRINGGANU. 1/00 t/f  
 to NDL, Bremen. 5/10 sold to Shimatani Tokusaburo, Osaka r. TAIYO MARU. 18/2/14 (also reported as  
 18/11/14) o/v Hakodate-Otaru (rice) wrecked at Setana off SW Hokkaido, salvaged and broken up.

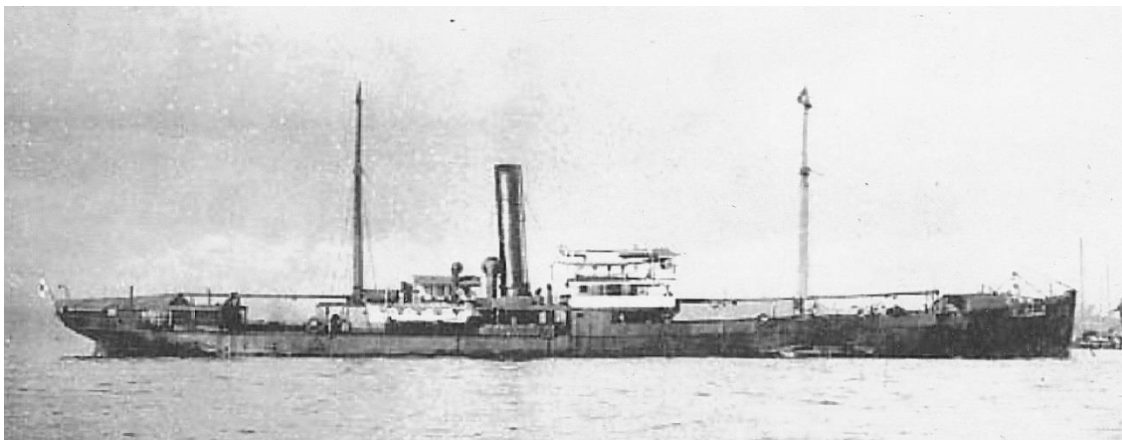


GORGON as TRINGGANU (Chinese school artist/Arnold Kludas)

**CERBERUS** (1894-99) 1754/94-12 (s.s.s, 257.3 x 41.1', T3cy/148nhp, 11¾k on trials, pass. certificate)  
 Built by Workman, Clark & Co. Ltd, Belfast (#118) for EIOSSC, 12/12 sailed Penarth for Singapore  
 (20/1/95) for Bangkok trade. 7/1/96 sailed Singapore on pilgrim charter to Jeddah. 4/99 sold to A.O.  
 Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. flag) r. SINGORA. 1/00 t/f to NDL, Bremen. 1910 sold to  
 Hachiuma Yeizo, Nishinomiya r. TAMON MARU No. 1 (1769gt). 1923 sold to Shiozake Yokichi, Kobe r.  
 KIKU MARU. 10/30 sold to Okuda, Osaka for demolition.

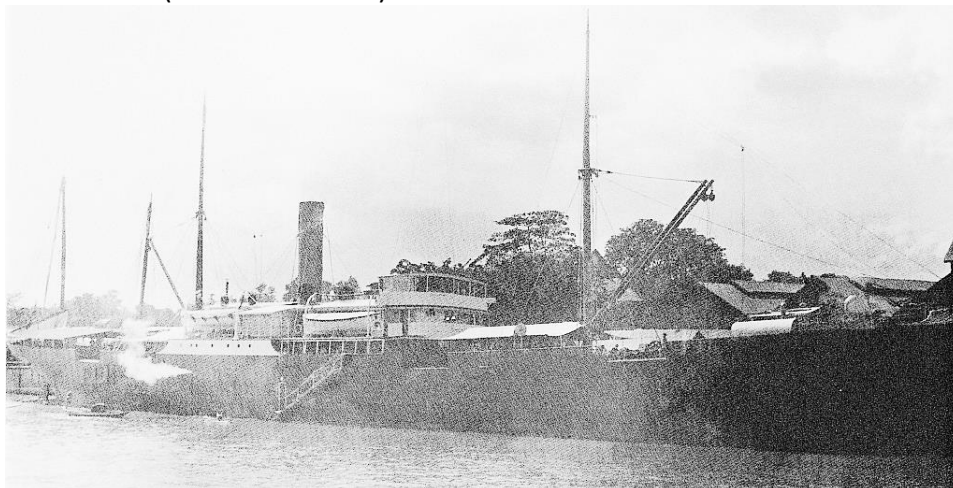


CERBERUS rebuilt as TAMON MARU No. 1 (1916 Japan Steamships Register).

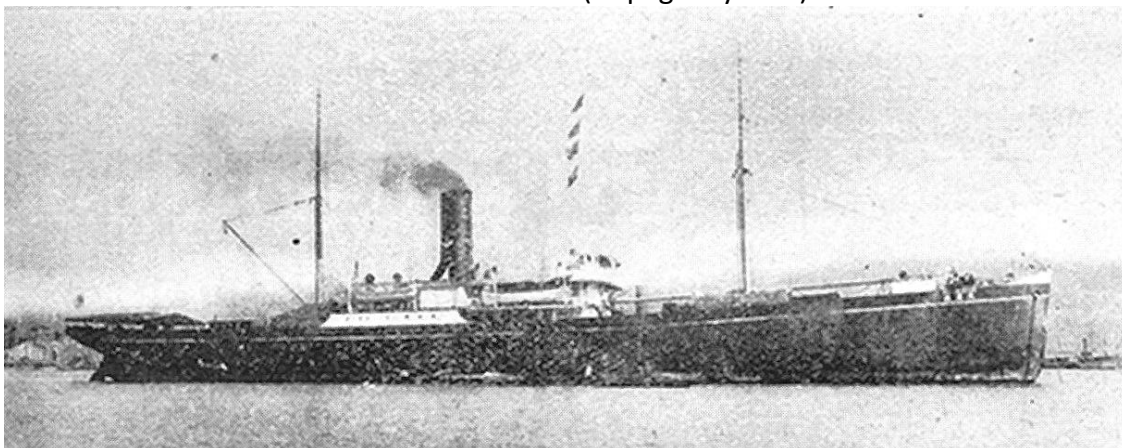


TAMON MARU No. 1, probably during WWI (from a postcard SK colln).

**CENTAUR** (1895-99) 1900/95-10 (s.s.s., 278.0 x 41.1', T3cy/148nhp; pass. certificate)  
 Built by Workman, Clark & Co. Ltd, Belfast (#126) for EIOSSC. 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. Flag) r. KORAT. 1/00 t/f to NDL, Bremen. 1911 sold to Kijiro Fukagawa, Nagasaki r. DAITO MARU. 1913 sold to Sensho Kogyo K.K., Hamadera. 2/7/17 in ballast sunk in collision with *Mihara Maru* off Tsukumo (35.23N 140.41E).



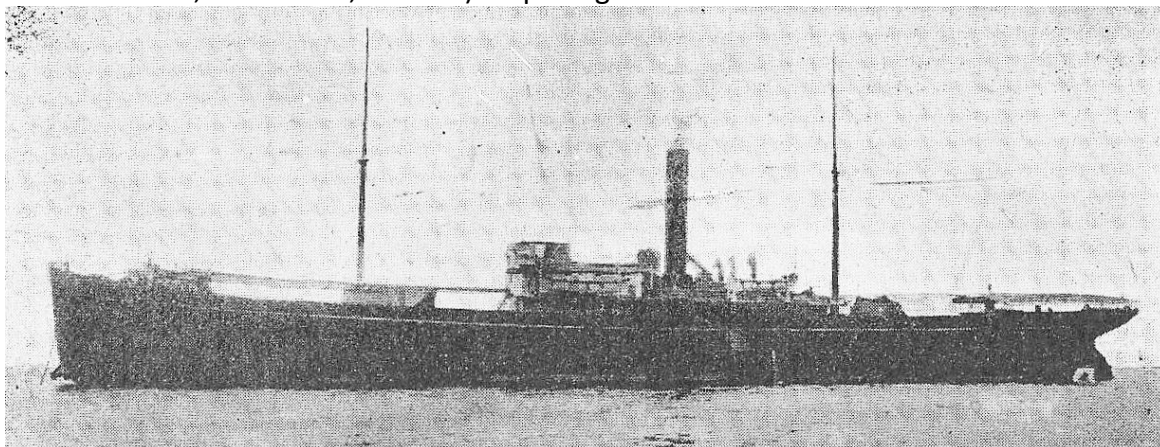
CENTAUR as KORAT (Hapag-Lloyd AG).



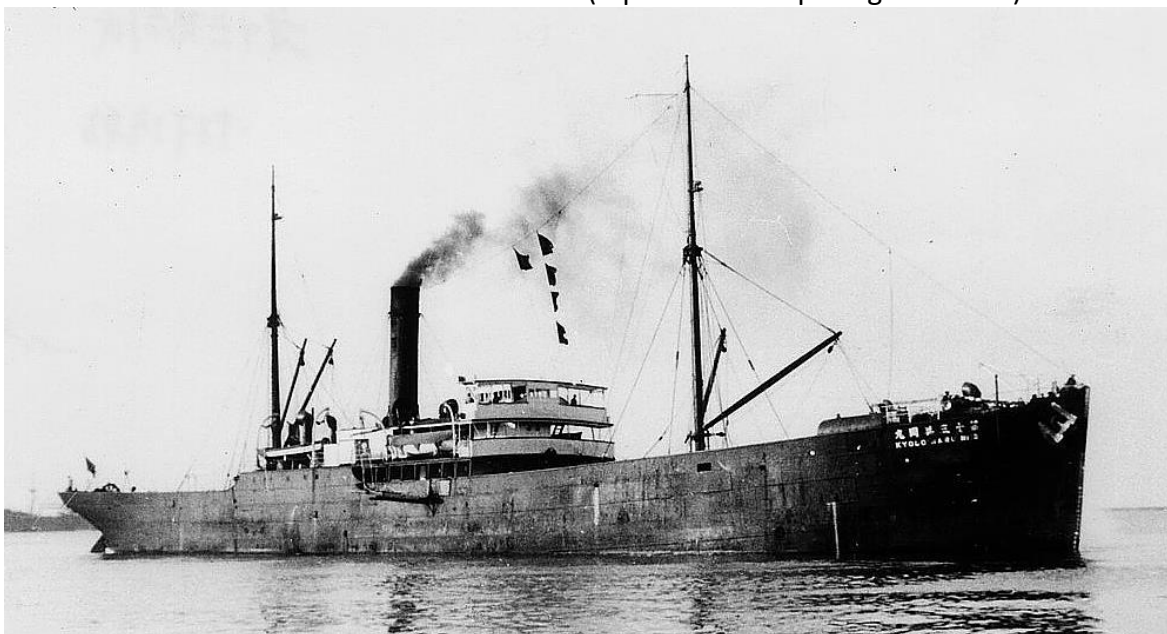
CENTAUR as DAITO MARU (Japan Steamships Register 1916).

**CHARON** (1896-99) 1920/96-2 (278.0 x 41.1; T3cy/148nhp)

Built by Workman, Clark & Co., Belfast (#127) for EIOSSC, 12/3 sailed Liverpool, 23/4 arrived Singapore . 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer, Bremen r. BANGKOK. 1900 t/f to NDL. 3/11 sold to Awanokuni Kiodo Kisen K.K., Tokushima r. KIODO MARU No. 13. 29/2/16 sold to Uchida Kisen K.K., Tarumi. 1921 sold to Oginuno Kaisho K.K., Takaoka. 1926 reg. t/f to Oginuno Sotaro K.K., Fushiki. 1944 sold to Hokkai Senpaku K.K., Tokyo. 14/7/45 o/v Otaru-Fushiki bombed and sunk by U.S.N. aircraft in 41.05N-140.55E (SW of Benten Misaki, off Aomori, Honshu) on passage Otaru-Fushiki.



CHARON as KYODO MARU No.13 (Japan Steamships Register 1916).



KYODO MARU No.13 at Otaru circa 1940/Uhachi Kinoshita/OCM)

### **Addendum**

On the outbreak of World War I in August 1914, when the local NDL fleet took refuge in the neutral ports of the Netherlands Indies and Thailand, Holts' feeder network, apart from the Deli line, suddenly ceased to exist. Tregonning (1967: 45) records that in 1913 NDL's transshipment cargo for Holts had

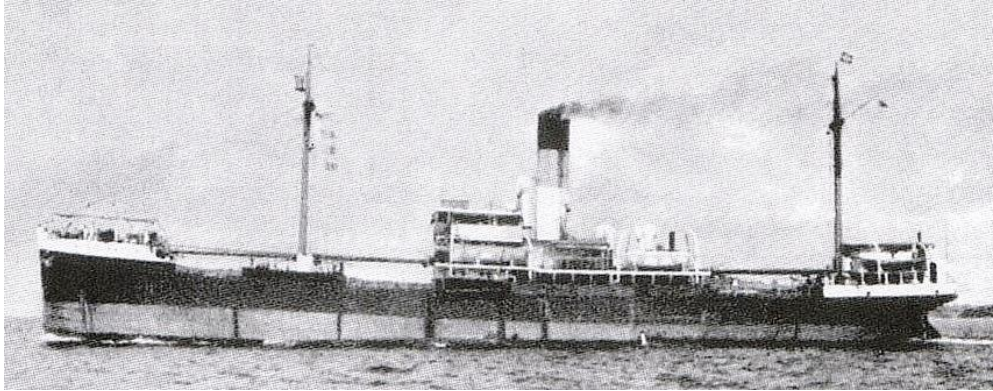
amounted to 18,500 tons through Bangkok and 10,800 tons through Borneo ports. Without prior warning, Ocean and Mansfields needed urgently to restore the network they had sold off fifteen years earlier. According to Tregonning, by agreement dated 31 October 1914, Holts would provide three new ships to Straits S.S. in return for a corresponding issue of 4,750 new shares equivalent to a third of the increased capital, thereby allowing Straits S.S. to expand its network beyond the Malay Peninsula. While several ships were chartered in the interim, the three new ships were ordered from the affiliated Taikoo Dockyard in Hong Kong. These freighters would be much larger than existing units of the Straits S.S. fleet and designed specifically for the Bangkok and Sandakan trades.

Duly delivered as *Kajang* (June 1916), *Kamuning* (August) and *Kepong* (December), in dimensions these vessels closely resembled the last ships built for EIOSSC, thus *Kajang* and *Kamuning* (279' x 41') compared with and *Centaur* (1895) and *Charon* (1896), both 278.0 x 41.1'. Engines were also similar triple expansion units of slightly lower power, 132 nhp compared with 148 nhp. *Kepong's* dimensions of 251' x 41' were comparable with the 257.3 x 41' of *Cerberus* (1894) and engines were likewise 132 versus 148 nhp. The profiles of *Cerberus* (as *Tamon Maru No. 1*) and *Kepong* also correspond, notwithstanding that the later vessel had a more prominent fo'c'sle, more superstructure amidships and the mainmast stepped at the poop. It therefore seems very likely that, to make haste, Holts did not design new ships but just tweaked the plans of their mid-1890s vessels.

Notwithstanding the twenty-year lapse of time, the new Taikoo-built trio were all excellent ships and served Straits well. *Kamuning* was lost to enemy action in 1942 but *Kajang* lasted in the fleet until sold to breakers in mid-1960. The slightly smaller *Kepong* (1916) was sold through Wheelock, Marden & Co. to the People's Republic in 1951 but survived even longer, at least until 1980, as the rebuilt *Zhe Hai 713*. The following details are extracted from our Shanghai Maritime Bureau Cargo ships list available elsewhere on the website.

**KEPONG** (Straits S.S., 1916-51) 1889/16-12 (251.0 x 41.1', T3cy/132nhp)

Built by Taikoo D.Y. & Eng. Co. Ltd, Hong Kong (#159) for Straits S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore (reg. Hong Kong) as KEPONG. 1926 reg. t/f to Singapore. Mostly Singapore-Bangkok trade but 10/35-1/37 chartered to WASN to replace wrecked *Minderoo*. until 8/1/42 sailed Singapore for Madras, then Indian coastal and Persian Gulf until end 9/42 reallocated to Military Store Service in Middle East. 14/1/43 arrived Alexandria, then N. Africa shuttle. 8/43 Red Sea, 9-12/43 Haifa, Mersin, Tripoli. 27/12/43 arrived Malta, thence through 1944 Adriatic supply run. 22/4/45 at Gibraltar, thence Hull (5/5) for repairs. 21/11/45 sailed Hull with cement and general on Glen Line sub-charter to Singapore (7/1/46) to resume local trading. c.5/46 dereq. and 9/46 resumed Singapore-Bangkok run. 6/51 sold to Far Eastern & Panama Tpt Corp. (Wheelock, Marden & Co. Ltd, mgrs), Panama r. WILBOO, then resold to PRC r. HAI WAI. c.1955 r. HOPING 10. RLR 1966 but by 1979 sailing as ZHE HAI 713. Still in service 3Q 1980. NFI. [BT 389/17/199]



KEPONG in Straits S.S. Co. colours: similar layout and profile to CERBERUS (1894) (W. Laxon).



KEPONG newly rebuilt by People's Republic of China as ZHE HAI 713, probably on arrival at Ningpo (Ville de Tanya).



KEPONG as ZHE HAI 713 in 1979 (Marcus Berger).



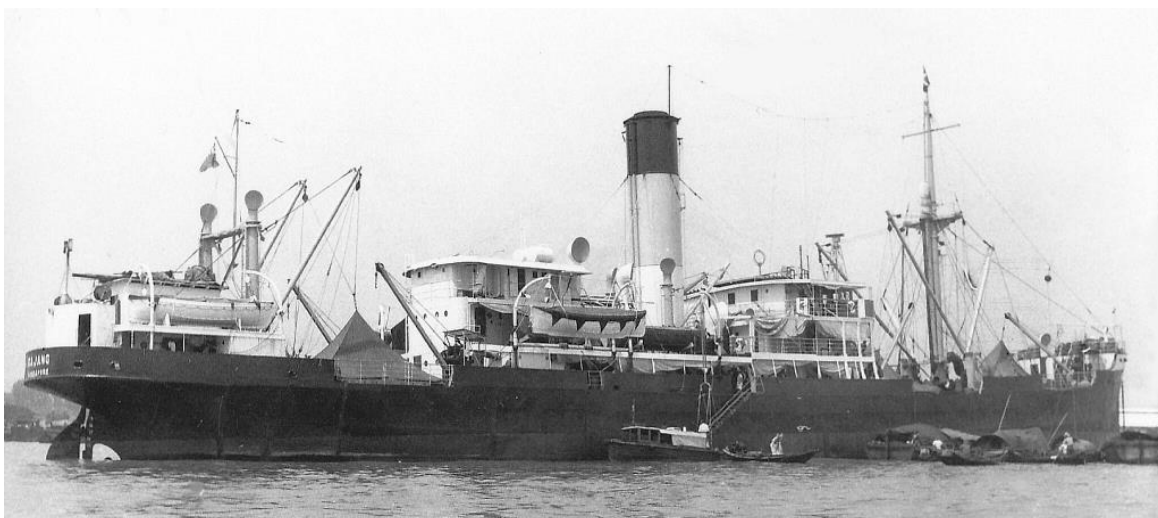
Immaculate ZHE HAI 713 negotiating the bend in the Whangpoo late-afternoon, slide no.36 on an American tourist's film processed by Kodak in August 1980 (SK\*).

**KAJANG** (Straits S.S., 1916-51) 2082 (2445)/16-6 (279.0 x 41.1', T3cy/132nhp/7k)

Built by Taikoo D.Y. & Eng. Co. Ltd, Hong Kong (#157) for Straits S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore (reg. Hong Kong) for Singapore-Jesselton-Sandakan trade. 1917-18 req. for service in Persian Gulf.. 1926 reg. t/f to Singapore. 24/12/41 sailed Singapore to Colombo. 2/42 alloc. to Liner Division (Glen Line Ltd, mgrs). 2/5 Colombo via Male to East Africa, then Simonstown (30/6) for repairs, 9/42 to Nigeria for coasting trade. 28/11/43-29/7/44 Table Bay for repairs. 8/44 reverted to Nigerian coast. 18/5/45 sailed Freetown for London (11/6) for repairs and fitting of refrigeration. 20/12/45 sailed London for Singapore for use as Store Ship for South East Asia Command (SEAC) operations in Java. By 3/47 resumed commercial service to North Borneo. 8/60 sold to Hong Huat Hardware Co. for breaking up at Singapore. [BT 389/17/103]



KAJANG at Singapore in 1958 (David Finch/NAA).



Another view of KAJANG at Singapore. KAMUNING was an identical sister (Tom Rayner\*)



KAJANG (1916) beached for demolition by Hong Huat, mid-1960 (R. Gabriel/H. Dick\*).

**KAMUNING** (Straits S.S., 1916-51) 2076/1686 (279.0 x 41.1', T3cy/132nhp)

Built by Taikoo D.Y. & Eng. Co. Ltd, Hong Kong (#158) for Straits S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore (reg. Hong Kong) for Sandakan and Bangkok trades. 1917-18 req. for service in Persian Gulf. 1926 reg. t/f to Singapore. 1940-41 mainly Bangkok trade. 7/2/42 sailed Rangoon for Colombo (rice), 15/2/42 missed by torpedo, then set on fire by gunfire from Japanese submarine I-66 in 8.35N, 81.44E, 15/2 taken in tow but 16/2 sank off Trincomalee. [BT 389/17/116]

## D. EIOSSC Precursors and Secondhand Vessels

During the 1880s Mansfield partners T.C. Bogaardt, A.P. (Passmore) Adams and Albert Crompton bought secondhand a small fleet of ships to provide feeder services for their principals, Ocean S.S. at Singapore and Penang. Those operating on the West Coast of Malaya transferred in November 1889 to the newly formed Anglo-Chinese firm of Straits S.S. Co. Ltd but several others remained under Bogaardt's personal control. At the beginning of 1891, after the NISN had surrendered its mail services in the Netherlands Indies, Bogaardt also took over the steamers *Devonhurst*, *Kongsee* and *Maha Vajirunhis*. In November 1891 these were brought together with several small OSSC vessels in the East Indian Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd (as above) to operate as feeders to OSSC and NSMO from Dutch ports, also to/from Sandakan, Bangkok and Saigon that lay beyond the scope of Straits S.S. Several elderly vessels, some from OSSC, some secondhand, were later acquired to supplement these lines.

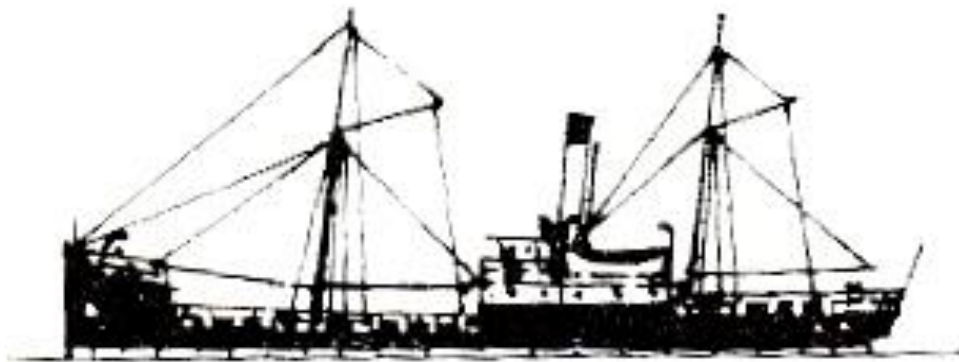
### Fleet List (Secondhand Vessels)

#### **PYAH PEKHET** (1883-89) 319/75-1 (i.s.s., 166.5 x 22.1', C2cy/60hp)

Built by Caird & Co., Glasgow (#187) for Burmah S.S. Co. Ltd, Penang for Penang-Klang-Malacca-Singapore line. 1881 sold to Hermann Katz, Penang. 11/83 sold for \$19,000 to T.C. Bogaardt and reg. at Penang to Phillip Holt. 13/1/89 at c.03.30 off Klang Straits light sank in minutes after struck abaft the foremast and holed by *Chow Phya* - 14 lost out of 86.

#### **WILL O' THE WISP** (1886-89) 286/83-6 (i.s.s., 120.4 x 22.2', C2cy/45rhp by Wood Bros, Sowerby Br.)

Built by Norfolk & Co., Hull and reg. at Hull (#29/1883) for W.S. Davison, Yokohama and 25/8 cleared Hull, 4-12/11 at Singapore en route to Japan. 5/8/84 at Keelung (from Shanghai) during French bombardment. 1/86 reg. at Singapore to A.P. (Passmore) Adams (W. Mansfield & Co. Ltd), Singapore for service to Malacca and Klang. 11/87 t/f to OSSC (56) and G.J. Mansfield (8). 11/89 t/f to Straits S.S. Co. 9/96 sold to Tan Poh Tong, Singapore. 5/98 sold to Tan Hock Hay, Singapore and reboilered. 8/99 sold to Lim Kee Joo. 7/00 sold to Ng Ngauw Teng. 9/06 sold to Sng (sic) Toon Ghee. 2/09 sold to Wee Bros S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore. 9/17 sold to Wong Po Keung, Hong Kong. 11/17 sold at auction to H.A. Lammert, Hong Kong. 3/18 sold to A.L. Alves, Hong Kong and 12/18 reg. t/f to HK. 9/22 sold to Govt of the Straits settlements. 11/22 sold to Teow Beng, Singapore and 1/23 reg. t/f to back Singapore. 4/24 sold to Teo Hoo Lye, Singapore. 16/11/33 THL died, t/f to TTG/TGT. 8/35 taken over with Soon Bee S.S. Co. Ltd by Heap Eng Moh S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore but advertised for sale 9/35 register closed on sale to Hoe Guan & Co. for breaking up.



Duncan Haws sketch of WILL O' THE WISP.

**MEMNON** (1888-91) 1290/61 (i.s.s./brig, 253.8 x 32.6', C2cy/150nhp 9k).

Built by Scott & Co., Greenock (#78) for Wm Lamport & George Holt, Liverpool for Liverpool, Brazil & River Plate S.N. Co. Ltd. 1872 original 2-cyl/150nhp engine by Greenock Foundry Co. replaced by compound engine by Fawcett, Preston & Co., Liverpool. 1888 sold to OSSC, reboilered and refitted for local trade. 1/89 began service HK-Sandakan-Singapore-HK. 10/93 t/f to EIOSSC. 21/10/98 SFP rep. sold by auction at HK for \$27,500 to Noel, Murray & Co., Shanghai but may not have eventuated. 4/99 sold by EIOSSC for dismantling at Singapore for use as hulk [addit. Details from Clydeships, SFP 27/11/30].

**RANEE** (1888-99) 617/81-3 (i.s.s., 185.0 x 27.1', C2cy/99nhp by T. Richardson & Sons, Hartlepool)

Built by Ramage & Ferguson, Leith (#27) for The Borneo Co. Ltd, London. 8/81 sold to Sarawak & Borneo SS Co. Ltd, Kuching. 10/88 sold to OSSC. 2/89 30 shares t/f to A. Holt (12), G.T. Mansfield (10), Albert Crompton (8). 3/89 reg. t/f to Liverpool. 1892 t/f to EIOSSC. 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore r. LABUAN. 1899 sold to Quah Beng Kee, Penang r. PIN SENG. 1904 Quah Seh Quan, Penang. 1907 t/f to Eastern Shg Co. Ltd, Penang. 1921 sold to Si Chang Kwong, Hong Kong, then resold to Chinese owners. 1922 owners blank. 1924 RLR.

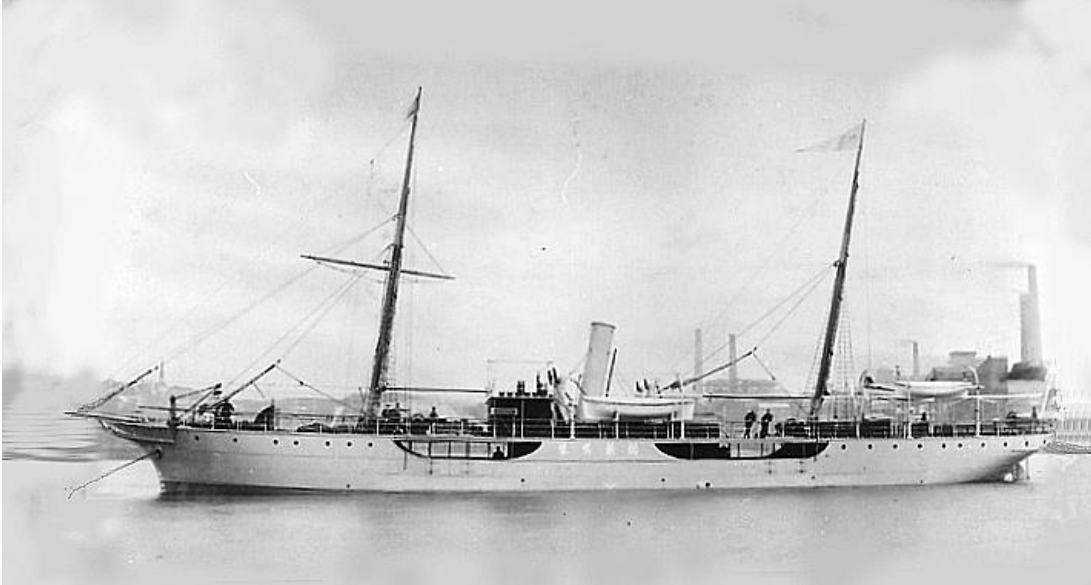
**BAN WHATT HIN** (1889-91) 361/85 (i.s.s., 162.6 x 25' C2cy/85rhp)

Built by Blackwood & Gordon, Port Glasgow to order of E. Boustead for Lee Keng Yong & Partners. 11/85 reg. at Singapore (#15/1885). 2/88 Wee Boon Teck (25), LEK (18) Lim Teck Ghee (4), Syed Mah. Bin Alsagoff (6). 11/88 WBT (24) to Lim Ho Puah. 3/89 LHP (24), LEK (24), LTG (4), A (6) = 58/64 to A.P. Adams (W. Mansfield & Co.), Singapore for Billiton and Pontianak trade. 6/91 t/f to Straits S.S. Co. Ltd. 1/11 sold to Toh Keng Gio Neo, Singapore. 12/16 sold to The Soon Keck Ltd, Malacca. 5/24 reverted to Straits S.S. by purchase of Soon Keck. 9/27 sold for breaking up. 3/28 register closed on advice broken up.

**BANJERMASIN** (1889-99) 428/1886-6 (iss, 174.0 x 23.7'; T3cy/80hp, 1 dk & shade dk)

Built by Wigham Richardson & Co., Newcastle (#203) for Guthrie & Co. (nominal owners), Singapore for £8,500 for Singapore-Borneo service [Tyneships]. 7/86 completed and subsequently reg. at Singapore as 6/1886 for J. Anderson & A. Johnston. 10/86 t/f to Kho Soen Tjio & Ang Eng Tjio, Banjarmasin (Dutch) for

Banjarmasin/Singapore trade. 1888 Ang Eng Tjio, Thio Koey Liong and Kho Soen Tjio. 9/89 sold in Singapore at auction to Gan Eng Seng for \$43,000 [STWI, 9/9/89], re-reg. at Singapore, re-engined and promptly sold to Ocean S.S. Co. (T.C. Bogaardt, Singapore mgr), Liverpool. 1/90 t/f to Liverpool. 1892 t/f to NSM 'Oceaan', Amsterdam. 1896 t/f East India Ocean S.S. Co., Singapore. 29/3/98 laid up at Singapore (9/98). 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. flag) r. SULU. 1/00 t/f to Norddeutscher Lloyd, Bremen. 3/00 sold to Tan Auco (Tuason & Sampedro), Manila r. TAN-AUCO. 13/3/01 wrecked on Pratas Reef, South China Sea.



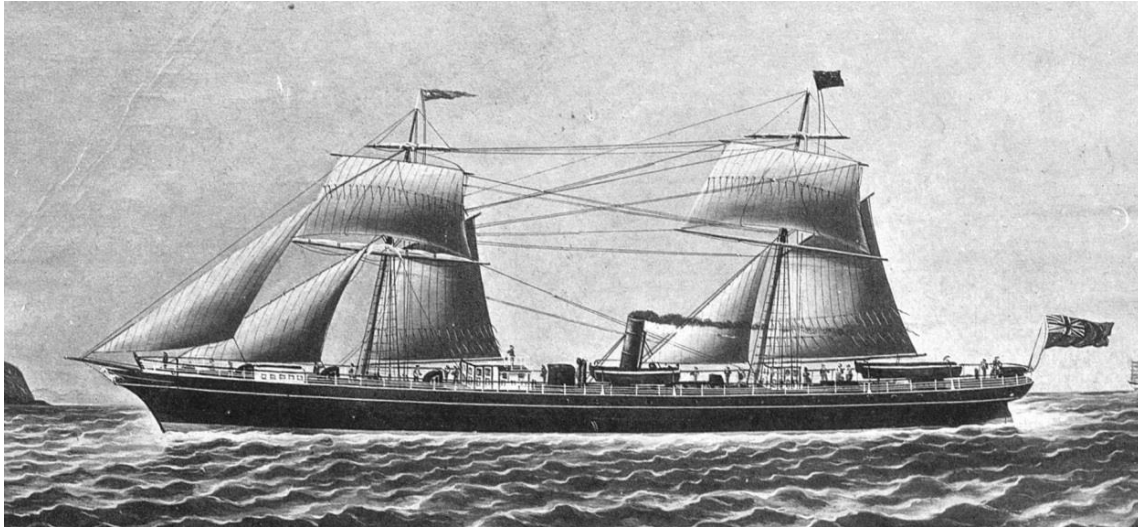
BANJERMASIN soon after completion. Chinese characters amidships (H. Dick colln/SK edit).



Refitted TAN-AUCO ex BANJERMASIN moored below Bridge of Spain, Pasig River, Manila, under U.S. flag, c.1900 (Univ. of Michigan).

**NORMANBY** (1889-92) 976/74-7 (i.s.s., 220.4 x 27.8', C2cy/160hp)

Built by Henderson, Coulborn & Co., Renfrew (#142) for J. Guthrie & Wm MacTaggart for E. & A. Mail S.S. Co. Ltd, London. 13/8/77 beached after striking rock near Percy Island on northward voyage ex Brisbane, patched in situ, repaired at Sydney. 5/1881 reg. at Singapore to J.S. Neave (14), G. Edgar (4), Lim Eng Keng (14), Wee Boon Tek (4), Lim Teck Ghee (4), Tan Kim Yan (6) and Ong Kew Ho (12). 4/83 LEK to Ong Ewe Hai (14). 10/83 JSN, GA, WBT, LTG sold out to OKH (now 44/64). 1884 sold to Ong Kew Ho, Singapore for Singapore-Java trade. 18/2/89 OKH died, 5/89 probate to Ong Poh Guat and placed in service to Sarawak for Lim Lan & Co. (12/89). 2/90 sold to T.C. Bogaardt, Singapore. 10/90 OSSC (34), G.J. Mansfield (10), A. Crompton (8), TCB (12) and t/f to Liverpool. 1891 t/f to EIOSSC. 6/92 t/f to NSMO (Dutch flag). Night 4-5/12/93 o/v Manila (28/11)-Singapore in rough seas wrecked near Singapore on Pulau Bintan, Capt. Selkers, child and a lascar drowned out of 4 pass. and 40 crew.



NORMANBY when operated by E. & A. By 1890s after sails likely to have been suppressed and bridge and poop to have been built up (carte-de-visite drawing, colln Peter Marquis-Kyle).

**FLINTSHIRE** (1890-96) 1565/72-7 (i.s.s., 270.7 x 32.8', C2cy/150nhp)

London & Glasgow E. & I. SB Co. Ltd, Glasgow (#162) for D.J. Jenkins & Co. ('Shire Line'), London. 5/88 sold to Lim Tiang Hee, Singapore. 8/89 sold to OSSC, Liverpool (1/90). 1891 t/f to EIOSSC. 6/92 t/f to NSMO (Dutch flag). 17/4/92 last arrival from UK. 5/92 t/f to Singapore-Moluccas line. 7/93 t/f to Saigon line. 7/7/95 arrived Singapore from Jeddah with pilgrims. 9/95 rereg. at Singapore to EIOSSC. 11/95 reg. t/f to Liverpool. 12/96 sold to Okazaki Tokichi, Kobe r. YAYEYAMA MARU. 13/12/98 sank off Moji after collision with P&O *Brindisi* (3553/80) and *Tokomaru* (6238/93).

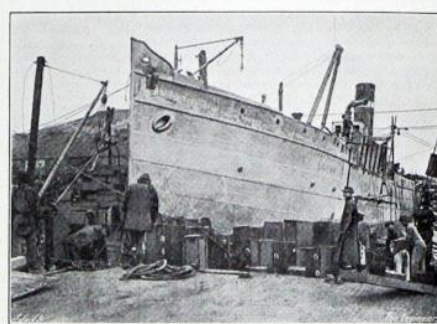
**KONGSEE** (1891-98) 1072/78-10 (i.s.s., 248.0 x 31.2', C2cy/255nhp by R. & W.E. Hawthorn & Co.)

Built by C. Mitchell & Co., Newcastle (#367) for Hermann Katz, Singapore for Singapore-Bangkok trade. 22/12/78 sailed London and 7/2/79 arrived Singapore and 12/2 re-reg. at Singapore. 1/83 t/f to Atjeh S.S. Co. Ltd (Katz Bros. with P. Landberg & Zoon, John Pryce & Co. and J.F. van Leeuwen & Co.), London for operation of Batavia-Atjeh supply contract with NEI Govt [STW, 12/7/83]. 6/83 sold to NISM, Batavia. 30/1/91 reg. at Singapore to sold to T.C. Bogaardt. 12/9/91 t/f to OSSC (34), TCB 12, G.J. Mansfield 10, A. Crompton (8). 9/91 reg. t/f to Liverpool. 1892 t/f to NSMO (Dutch flag). 1895 rereg. at Singapore to TCB. 3/98 sold to Tan Kian Tian S.S. Co. Ltd, Singapore. 17/1/99 W.H. Frigall (Chartered

Bank) empowered to sell at Manila, where sold to Warner, Barnes & Co. 1901 sold to US Army for use as transport r. LISCUM. 1905 fitted out as cable repair ship. 27/8/13 sank alongside wharf at Shanghai while under repair – salvaged and refitted. 1922 sold to Tuason & Sampedro, Manila r. NUESTRA SENORA DE ALBA. c.1925 sold to Hercules Lumber Co. Inc., Manila. 7/31 i/s Manila-Cebu-Zbamboanga-Jolo to agency of Madrigal & Co. (31 first-class passengers). 12/33 sold to Yung Shun S.S. Co. (T.A. Chow mgr), Newchwang r. YUNG SHUN. RLR 1956 after belated report 1938 sold to Japanese to be broken up and 1939 scrapped at Shanghai.



KONGSEE (Martin Lindenborn/SK edit).



US Army Transport LISCUM ex KONGSEE sunk at Shanghai, Sept. 1913 and subsequently docked for repair, masts removed (*The Engineer*).

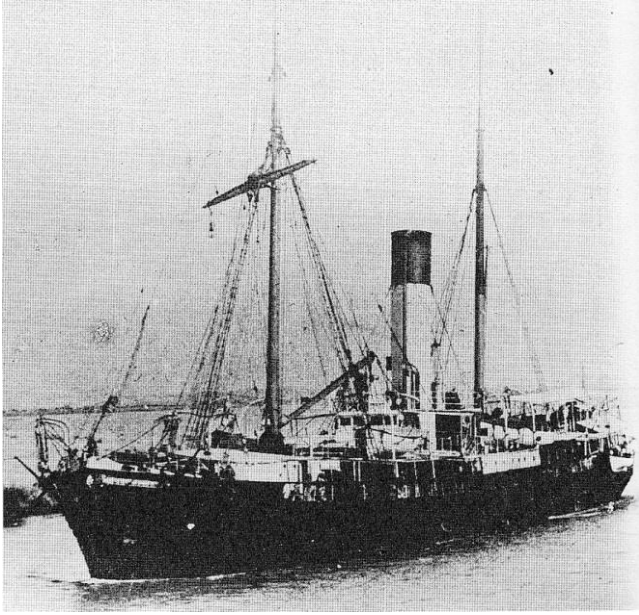


LISCUM repaired and refitted (*Present Day Impressions of the Far East and Prominent Chinese at Home and Abroad* p.362).

**MAHA VAJIRUNHIS** (1891-93) 1300/81-9 (s.s.s, 254.6 x 31.2', C2cy/235nhp by Wallsend S/way Co.)  
Built by C. Mitchell & Co., Newcastle (#423) for Hermann Katz (Katz Bros.), Singapore (reg. London) for Singapore-Bangkok trade. By 1/82 in service and set record passage of 2 days 17 hours from Bangkok Bar to Singapore (800 miles, c.10.5k) [STW, 14/3/87]. 1882 t/f to Atjeh S.S. Co. Ltd, London [as above]. 6/83 sold to N.V. Nederlandsch Indische Stoomvaart Mij and registry t/f to Batavia. 1891 sold to F.G. Bogaardt, Batavia for A. Holt & Co., Singapore for Singapore-Atjeh-Padang trade. 11/93 sold to N.V. Koninkl. Paketvaart Mij, Batavia. 30/12/05 last sailing Singapore for Padang, thence Batavia. 3/06 sold to R. Lenzmann, Hamburg, then 10/5/06 resold to Mine Sato (Sato Shokai mgrs), Kobe r. DAI-YEKI MARU. 6/5/09 sold to Yoshitaro Kawasaki, Kobe. 14/5/10 sold to S.N. of Count H.H. Keyserling (Russian S.N. & Tpt Co.), Vladivostok r. TROUVOR. 2/9/11 stranded and sank in 43.39N 135.15E, near Olga Bay inbound from Vladivostok.

**DEVONHURST** (1891-96) 1559/74-8L (i.s.s., 286.0 x 33.1', C2cy/202nhp by N.E. Marine Co. Ltd, Sld)  
Built by C. Mitchell & Co., Newcastle (#302) for E.H. Watts (Watts, Milburn & Co.), London. By 3/76 in service Singapore-Penang under Katz Bros. agency. 1878 sold to Katz Bros., Singapore (reg. London). 1883 t/f to Atjeh S.S. Co. Ltd, London [as above]. 6/83 sold to NISM, Batavia. 2/ 2/91 reg. at Singapore to T.C. Bogaardt (64). After repairs 26/2/91 sailed Singapore for Surabaya and ports - 8/3 at 01.20 rammed and sank *Strathendrick* (2337/89) in Madura Strait while latter o/v Cardiff-Surabaya (coal). 12/9/91 t/f to OSSC (34), TCB (12), GTM (10), AC (8). 1891 to NSMO. 23/9/91 t/f to EIOSSC, Liverpool. 24/1-25/3/95 pilgrim voyage to Jeddah, then reverted to Saigon line. 2/96 sold at Hong Kong to Yamada Akitaro, Osaka r. KIUHO MARU, gt 1808. 1898 sold to Rikitaro Hori, Osaka. 1901 sold to Matsunosuke Tanaka, Osaka (reg. Kobe). 1913 sold to Kanesuke Hachiuma, Tarumi, gt 1996. Same year t/f to Yeizo Hachiuma. 1914 broken up in Japan.

**DEUCALION** (1896-99) 2111/72-3L (i.s.s., 322.0 x 33.7', C2cy/208nhp by R. Stephenson & Co., N'ctle)  
Built by A. Leslie & Co., Newcastle (#143) for OSSC, Liverpool. 9/91 t/f to NSM 'Oceaan', Amsterdam. 8/95 at Penang from Liverpool via Jeddah with 640 pilgrims. 3/6/96 arrived Singapore after last voyage from Liverpool to Java, then to Tanjong Pagar Dock for extensive repairs prior to entering HK-Sandakan trade. 7/96 reg. at Singapore to EIOSSC, then 22/7 t/f to Liverpool. 2/99 withdrawn from HK-Sandakan line and t/f to Amoy-Straits trade. 4/99 sold to A.O. Meyer (Behn, Meyer & Co.), Singapore (Ger. flag). 1/5 sailed for Amoy an 6/96 r. SANDAKAN. 1/00 t/f to NDL, Bremen. 1903 sold to Tung Kee & Co., Shanghai r. TAI PING. 1906 sold to Horatio Robertson (British merchant), Shanghai and resold to Russian Govt, Vladivostok. 1910 sold to Ellwanger Bros., Vladivostok r. ERMAK. 1912 sold to Kousnetzoff Bros. & Co., Vladivostok. 17/2/13 arrived Shanghai and 3/13 sold for breaking up in Shanghai.



DEUCALION in the Suez Canal (Arnold Kludas).

### **E. Singapore-Fremantle Line (jointly with West Australian S.N. Co. Ltd)**

The West Australian S.N. Co. was established in 1887 by Bethell & Co. with other London and Fremantle merchants. Gold discoveries in the Kimberley in 1885 and east of Perth at Southern Cross in 1888 boosted the small economy of the vast colony of Western Australia with a rising demand for imports and good loadings of wool, sandalwood and pearl shell from northwest roadsteads. Although not yet operating to Australia, Holts could see the potential and in 1890 came in as a joint party by contributing the purpose-built *Saladin* (1890) to run alongside *Australind* (1886), while the steam lighter *Fantee* was sent down from Singapore for use at Cossack pending delivery of the purpose-built *Beagle* (1892) on joint account. *Sultan* (1894) was added as a second OSSC ship and on 4 May 1897 achieved permanent fame by being the ship to officially open the new ocean harbour of Fremantle. This first pair were replaced by *Charon* (1903) and *Gorgon* (1908). In 1924 the motorship *Centaur* replaced *Charon* and in 1933 a new *Gorgon*, also a motorship, replaced its namesake. After the Great Depression caused the oldest ship, WASN's *Gascoyne* (1907), to be sold to breakers in January 1932, it became a three-ship service. Then in September 1935 WASN's *Minderoo*, stranded at Port Hedland and became a total loss. OSSC ordered *Gorgon* (1936) as a sister to *Charon* (1933), bought up WASN's 50% share in the latter ship, and WASN liquidated. OSSC's three ships maintained fortnightly sailings until the end of 1941. After wartime dislocation and the tragic loss of *Centaur* while serving as a hospital ship, sailings resumed in February 1946 as a two-ship line, the gap being filled, in effect, by Royal Inter-ocean Line's *Maetsuycker* (1936). WASN's own vessels are set out in the following section. In mid-1964 the two elderly motorships were replaced by the much larger and faster *Centaur*, which maintained a single-ship service until September 1982, with a final voyage in December 1983. The WASN ships are detailed in the ensuing section (F).

## Fleet List

**FANTEE** (1890-92) 167/79 see Section B

**BEAGLE** (1892-08) 147/92 (C4cy/27rhp. 2-sc, 4.6" draft, 300 wool bales, also cattle)  
Blackwood & Gordon, Glasgow (#227) for BG-TA-A. Holt as steam lighter at Cossack. By 3/93 in service.  
6/98 blown ashore at Cossack. Mid-1908 sold to Capt. G. Gaggino, Singapore. ca. 10/1/09 sailed  
Singapore for Bangkok, where delivered to Siamese Govt Naval Dept for use as a torpedo storeship r.  
BANCHU. 2/09 struck rocks and beached in Gulf of Siam but refloated and towed back to Bangkok for  
repairs. NFI. [Trove, eresources.nlb.gov.sg]



BEAGLE blown ashore at Cossack 2/4/98 in cyclone (SLWA)

**SALADIN** (1890-04) 1874/90-6 (sch. rig, 254.6 x 38.2', C2cy/159nhp/12k by Fawcett, Preston & Co.,  
Liverpool, pass. and 168 horses)

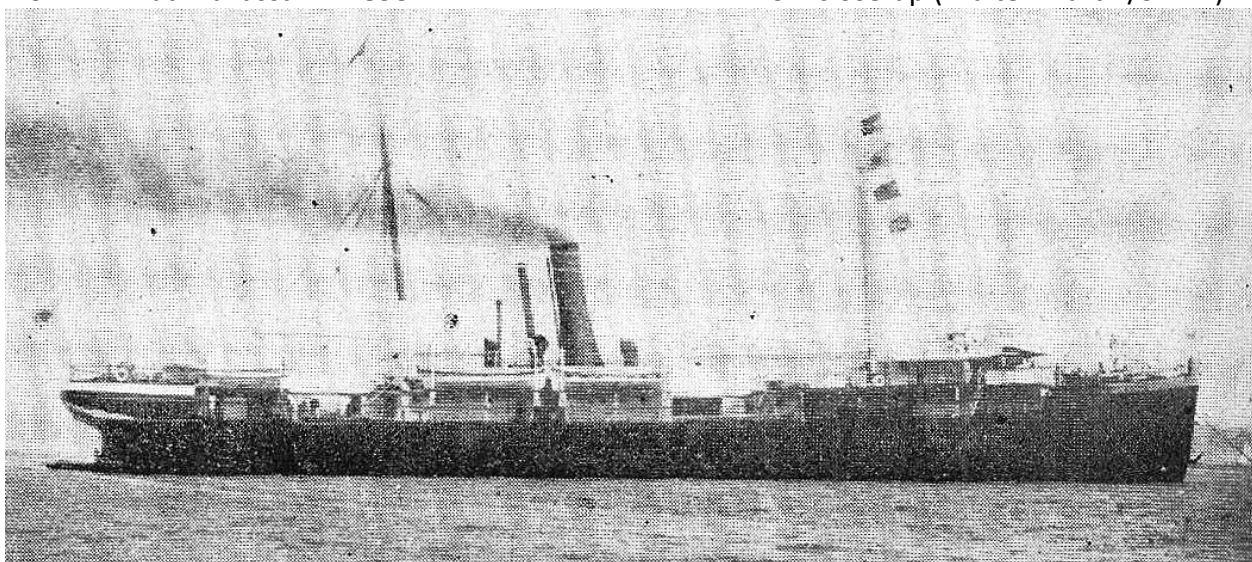
Built by Thos. Royden & Sons, Liverpool (#254) for OSSC, Liverpool. 3/9/90 at Singapore – 23/9 at  
Fremantle on maiden voyage. 1895 reg. at Fremantle as 3/1895 for OSSC, A.P. Adams and W.E.  
Molesdale. 29/9/03 (Capt. Torrible) last sailing from Fremantle for Singapore (22/10). Partially  
dismantled at Singapore and 19/12/03 towed to Penang by Hyson for use as tobacco hulk [ST,  
17/12/03]. 1/12/04 sold to Kawasaki Yoshitaro, Kobe r. KOTOHIRA MARU No.3. 11/4/13 sold to  
Kawachi Kentaro, Kobe. 5/1925 broken up in Japan.



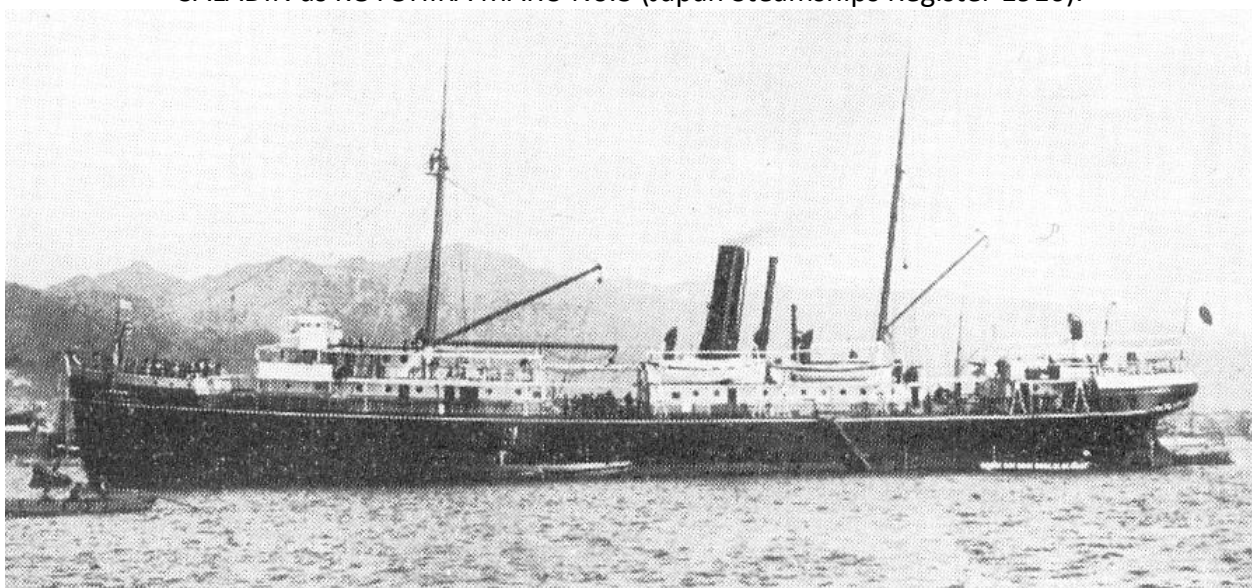
SALADIN at Makassar in 1893.



Bow close-up (Walter Martin/SLWA).



SALADIN as KOTOHIRA MARU No.3 (Japan Steamships Register 1916).



KOTOHIRA MARU No.3 at home port of Kobe (Kawasaki Kisen).

**'THE STEAMER SALADIN: HER FIRST VOYAGE TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA'**

*The Daily News*, Perth, 23 Sept. 1890, p. 3 [Trove]

"The Saladin is of 1497 tons register, and with single combined engines of 210 h.p. Her displacement is 2018 tons; dimensions 256 ft. by 38ft. She has three decks, is clinker built with iron framework. There are five bulkheads with 2 watertight compartments. She carries 2 water tanks, each capable of holding 100 tons. She was built on the Mersey and can be used, if required as a transport. Her average speed is 12 knots, and she accomplished 13 knots on her trial trip. The speed can be increased by forced draught. She carries a crew of 75, all told, the officers, and engineers and the stewards being English and the men Lascars.

"As a cargo and passenger boat she affords exceptional facilities. For the reception and discharging of cargo the whole of the sides can be opened up. She is fitted according to the Admiralty regulations for the carrying of horses, having accommodation for 168. No slings are used as the animals are walked on board. We are informed by Captain Pitts that two steamers leave Singapore direct for London every week, In the event of wool being shipped at, say, Cossack, a telegram will enable one of these vessels to reserve space for the cargo which is then forwarded direct and without delay,

"The general arrangement and accommodation for passengers is of a more than ordinary description. She is fitted with electric light throughout, and has a powerful search light on the bridge, 12,000 candle power. There is a large refrigerator, capable of carrying 30 tons of provisions. A quantity of provisions stowed in this chamber when the vessel left Liverpool are now quite sound and wholesome. There is a very handsome music room and smoking room. There are seven bath rooms, each fitted with a shower bath, and the same number of latrines.

"All passenger accommodation is on deck with doors opening on the promenade deck. The first and second class divisions are separated by gates. The first class passengers being placed amidships and forward are entirely out of the reach of the smell from the engine room, the oscillation of the screw, and the odour from the cooks quarter. The first class dining room is fitted with comfortable detached tables, with punkahs, The food is constantly kept hot by a steam press, and is served from two bars, first and second class respectively. Under this arrangement the stewards need not leave the room.

"A special feature is the ventilation. The skylight can be opened at the top, as also 14 inch diameter portholes, and the latter not being inserted in the ship's side there is no danger of inundation. When the vessel is steaming there is a current of air from end to end. Two doors open in the middle of the first class compartment causing a cross-current of air in hot weather, The forward decks are covered with awnings.

"In case of there being a very large number of passengers, the saloon is fitted with extra accommodation on the Pullman car principle, the berths being used temporarily, and then shut up again until required, There is a shaving saloon on board. All the compartments are very spacious. There are six life-boats and one steam-launch, fitted with copper air tight bunks, on board."

**SULTAN** (1894-09) 2063/94-4 (s.s.s, 258.5 x 38.0', T3cy/206nhp; pass., t/d cattle or 1450 sheep)

Built by Workman, Clark & Co. Ltd, Belfast (#107) for OSSC and WASNC (jointly). 14/4/94 sailed Liverpool for Singapore. c.27/6/94 at Fremantle on maiden voyage. 1895 reg. at Fremantle as 4/1895. 22/12/08 arrived Singapore after last WA voyage – crew t/f to new *Gorgon* (1908). 4/2/09 sailed for HK.

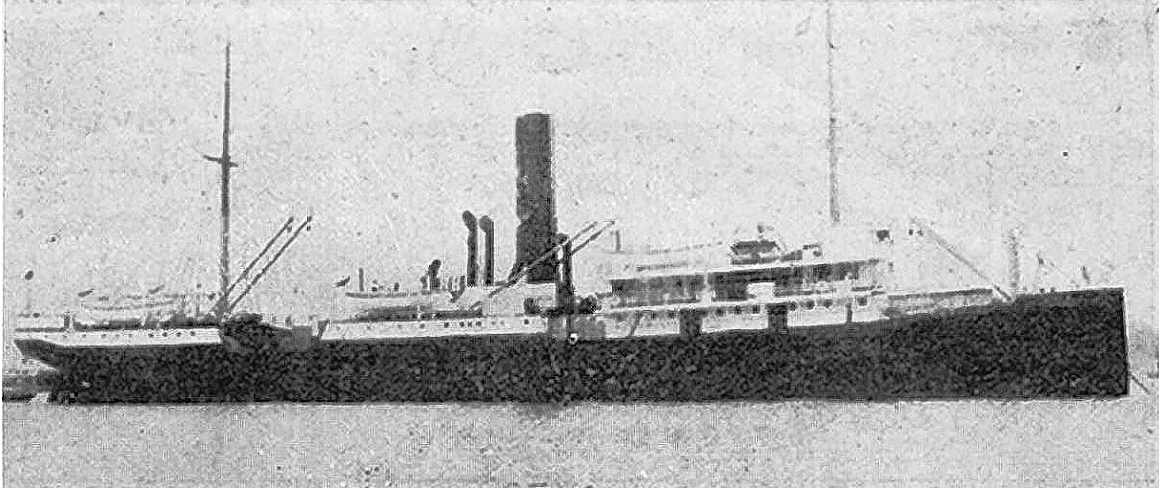
4/09 sold to Keizo Oaki, Yokohama and reg. to Oaki Goshi K. r. KAYO MARU. 3/22 sold to Sajiyo Yamamoto, Yokohama. 1925 sold to Daishin Yoko K.K., Dairen. 1925 taken over by North-Eastern Naval Squadron (Chang Tso-lin) based at Tsingtao and used at Newchwang as aux. gunboat (3-pdrs and machine guns) WEI-HAI. Reported broken up in China 1927 (Kizu) but also 6/29 listed LCI, then NFI but also reported 1929 laid up at Yokohama and 1930 broken up.



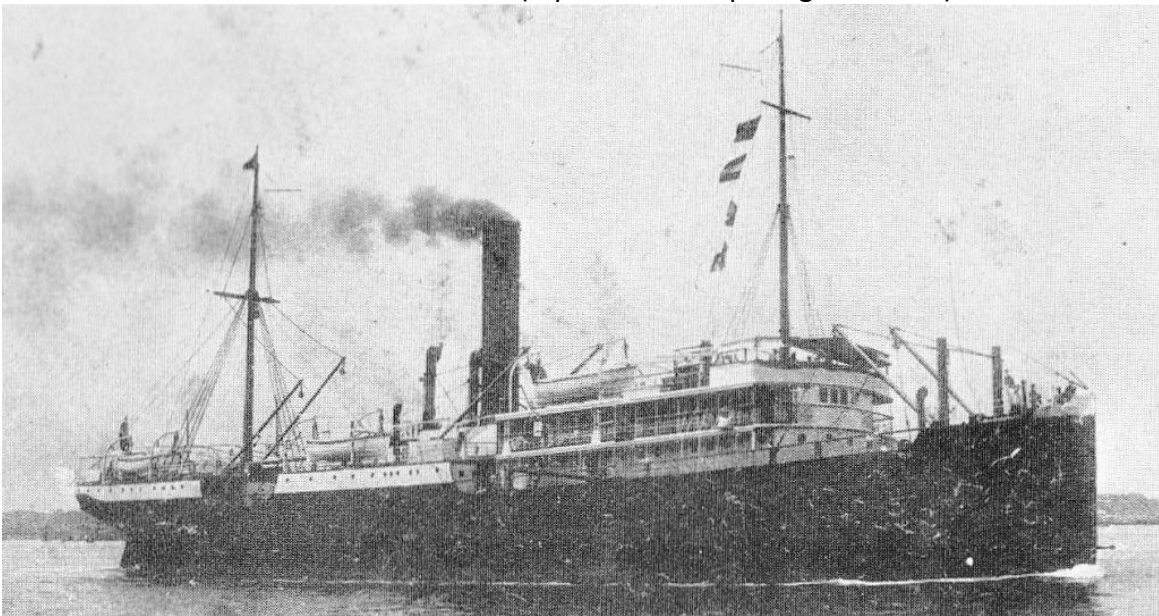
SULTAN at official opening of the new port of Fremantle, 4 May 1897 (SLWA).



SULTAN in Holt colours etc. (Flotilla Australia)

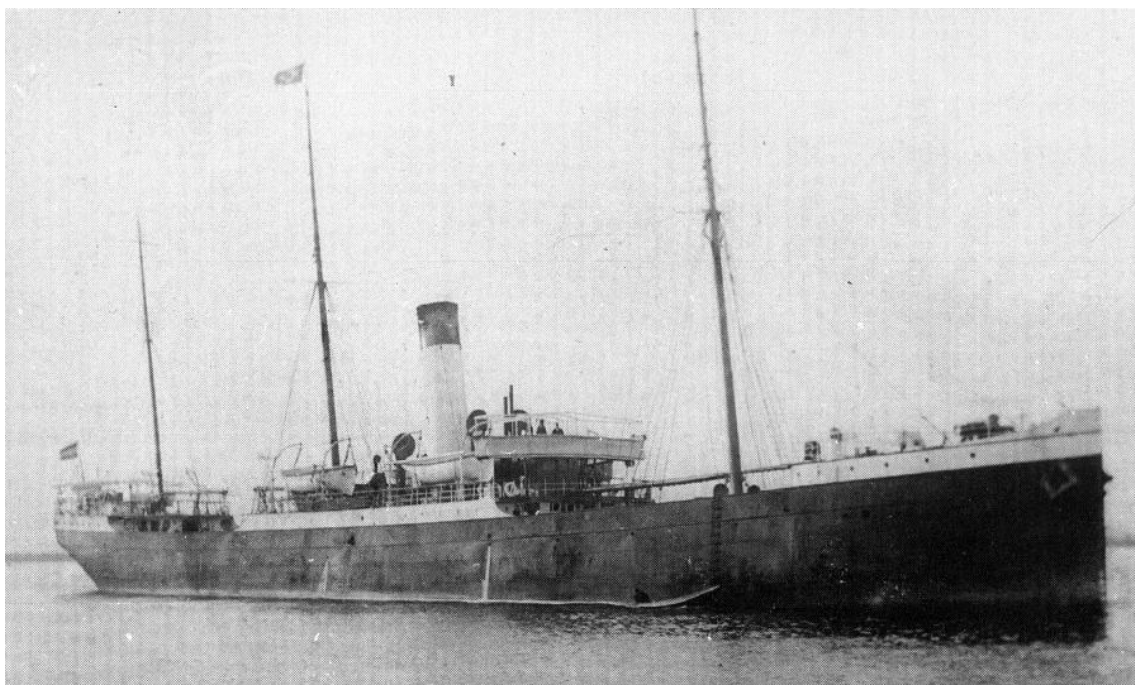


SULTAN as KAYO MARU (Japan Steamships Register 1916).



KAYO MARU ex SULTAN (Sajiro Yamamoto/*Ships and Ports*).

**ANCHISES** (intermittently 1897-06) 2718/88-7 (s.s.s., 325.8 x 40.2', T3cy/383nhp)  
 Built by Wigham Richardson & Co., Newcastle (#221) for Wilhelm Lund (Blue Anchor Line), London as WILCANNIA. 9/97 last loading from Australia to UK. End 1897 sold to OSSC, Liverpool. 1898 t/f to NSMO, Amsterdam. 1905 reverted to OSSC. Q2/1910 broken up at Briton Ferry.



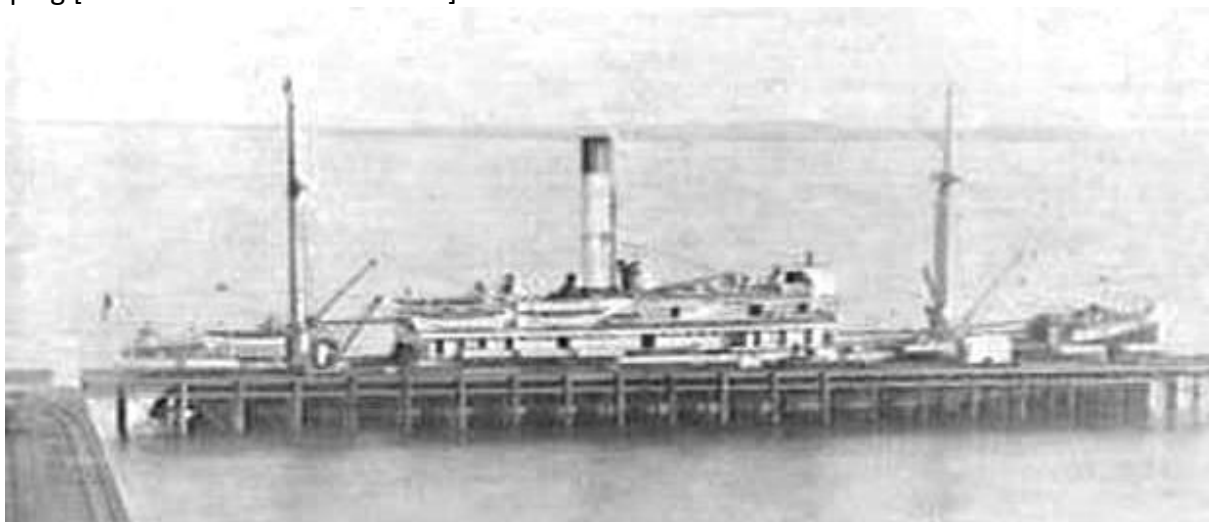
3-masted ANCHISES (G.J. de Boer colln/<http://www.tynebuiltships.co.uk/W-ships/wilcannia1888.html>9).



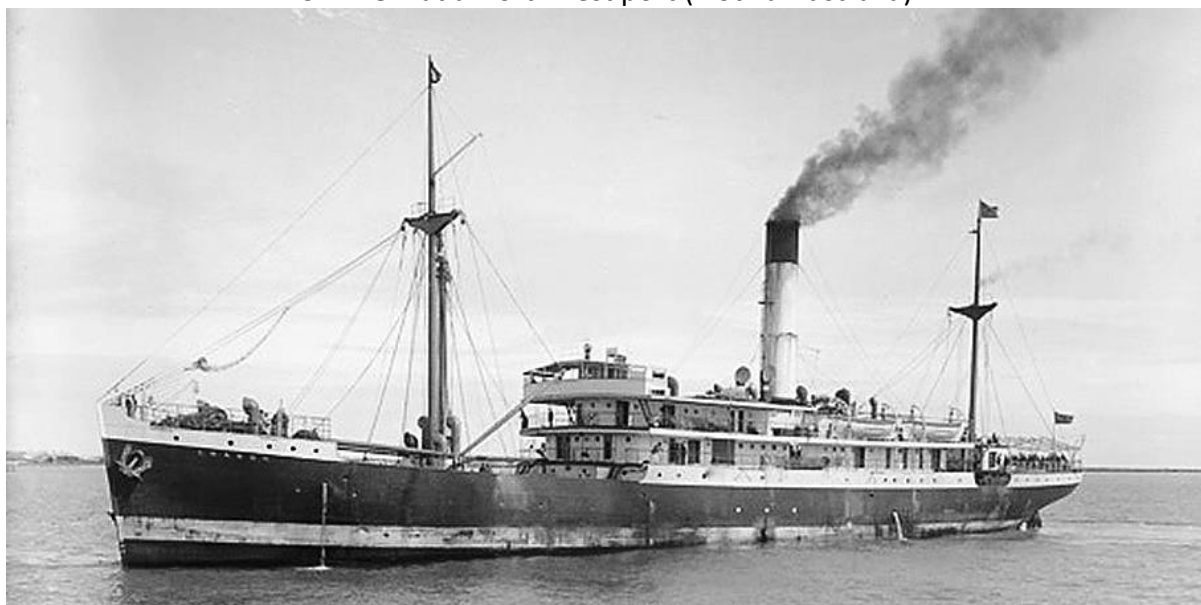
ANCHISES (Fawcett family/<http://waratahrevisited.blogspot.com/2018/11/ss-wilcannia-x-2.html>).

**CHARON** (1903-25) 1682/03-3 (sch. rig, 306.1 x 45.2', T3cy, 179hp/12k; 98 saloon, 46 2<sup>nd</sup>; t/d cattle). Built by Caledon S.B. & E. Co. Ltd, Dundee (#166) for OSSC for WA-Straits line. 17/5/03 sailed London to Darwin (30/6), thence Singapore, 17/8 arrived Fremantle and reg. at Fremantle for OSSC as 103/1903. 5/20 reg. t/f to Liverpool. 11/11/24 last sailing from Fremantle. 2/25 sold to Quach Dam, Swatow r. YUAN LEE. 1/27 t/f to Yuan Hseng S.S. Co. Ltd. (Quach Dam, later heirs mgrs), Swatow. 1935 sold to Mok Hing Kiu, Hong Kong r. KING LEE. 8/35 sold to Kwang Tung Products Sales Bureau, Canton r. WING FOOK 永福. 1938 req. by Chinese Navy, Transportation Dept. By early 1939 laid up at Hong Kong. 1941 sold to Wallem & Co. Ltd (ben. owner Moh. Nemazee), Panama r. IRIS. 2/47 sold to Shaw Hsing S.S. Co.

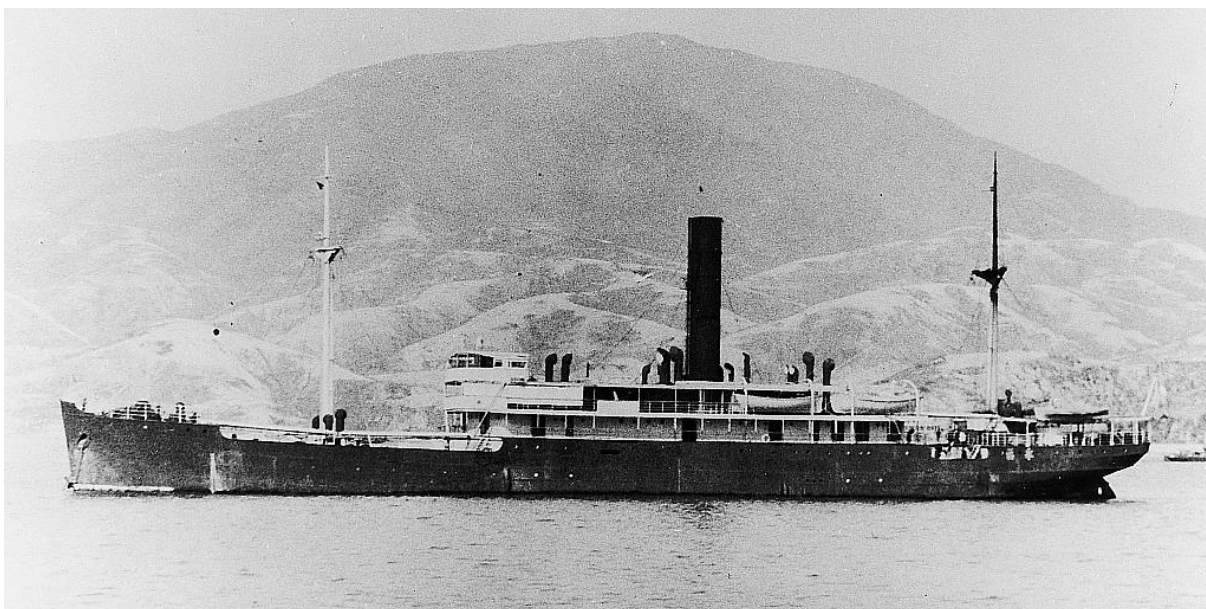
Ltd, Shanghai r. HSIANG HSING (2274 gt). 31/1/49 at 0530 hours in fog collided with and sank *Masbate* (767/95) 18 miles NE of the Tungyin Island Lighthouse near Foochow, 23 rescued, 25 lives lost, *Hsiang Hsing* holed above waterline. 7/3/50 stranded in Outer Harbour, Keelung, 2/7 refloated and sold for scrapping [addit. details from W. Schell].



CHARON at a Northwest port (Flotilla Australia).



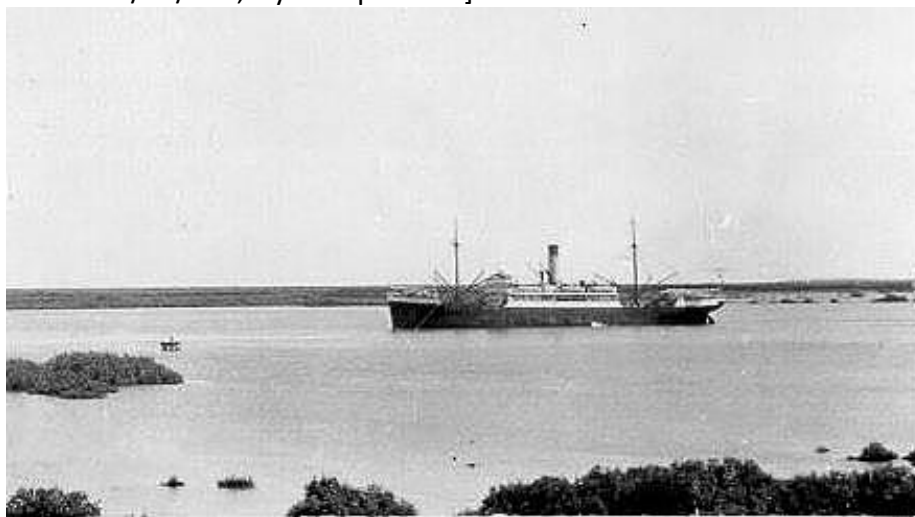
CHARON (SLWA).



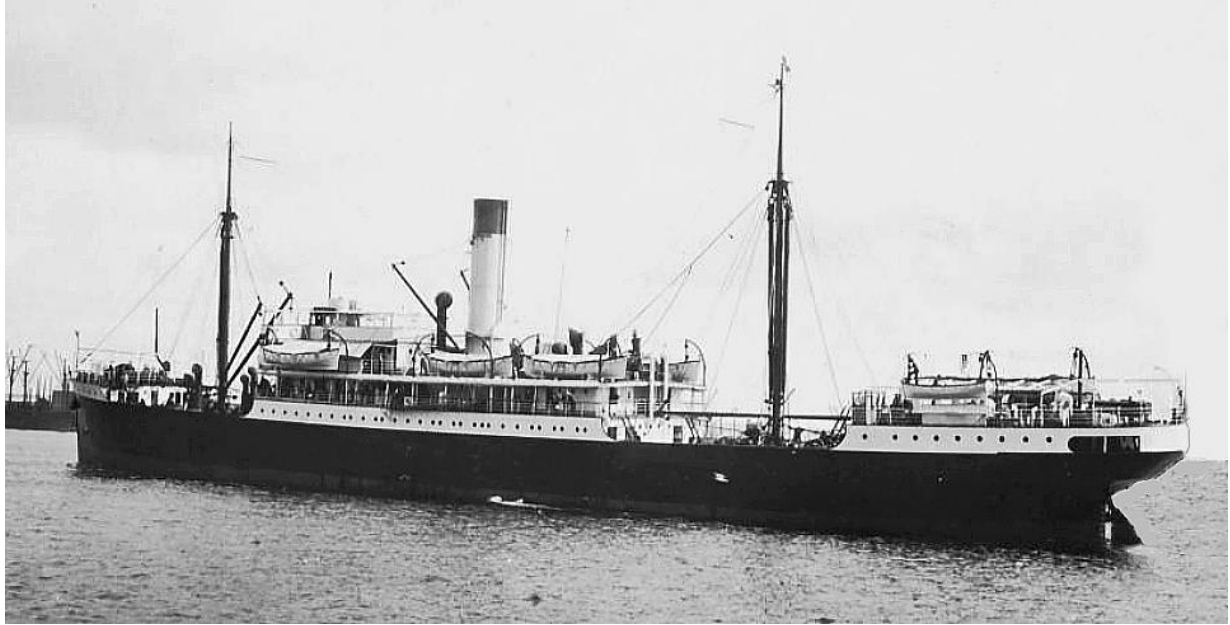
CHARON laid up at Hong Kong, October 1939, as WING FOOK (D. Gammon\*)

**GORGON** (1908-28) 2885/08-10 (s.s.s, 303.6 x 42.2', T3cy/189hp, 10.5k)

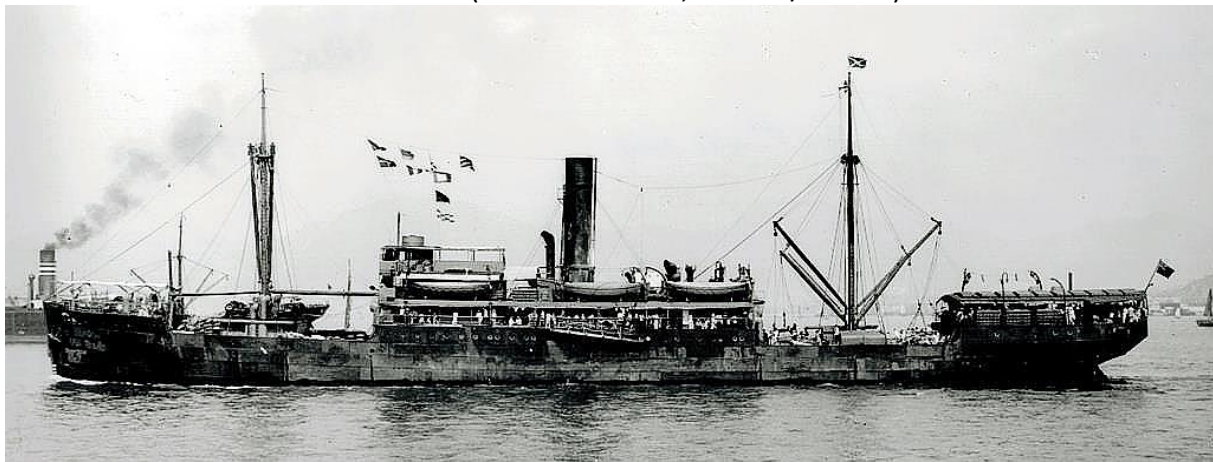
Built by Scott's Eng & S.B. Co. Ltd, Greenock (#424) for OSSC. 29/12/08 maiden sailing Singapore-Fremantle. 11/15-2/20 under requisition, incl. from 5/17 as Expeditionary Force Transport G-021 on OSSC. 15/1/28 final (91<sup>st</sup>) voyage from Fremantle [WA, 16/1/28]. 4/28 sold to Cheong Hing SS Co. Ltd (Wo Fat Sing), HK r. LYEEMOON. 11/11/39 req. at HK but remained in fortnightly HK-Saigon trade. 5/41HK- Sandakan, then from 6/41 HK-Straits trade. 31/12/41 Singapore to Colombo (13/1 for repairs) and Calcutta for boiler repairs (4/3-3/4), then Indian coasting trade. 6/42 taken over by Govt of India as cased oil carrier deployed to Red Sea, East Africa and Mauritius. 24/11/42 arrived at Alexandria and from 3/12 in Benghazi supply run. 3-4/1/43 on second voyage wrecked at Benghazi in winter gale, CTL. [addit. details from BT389/19/248, clydeships.co.uk]



GORGON of 1908 in Western Australian waters (SK colln).



GORGON (colln John Watt, ANMM/SK edit).

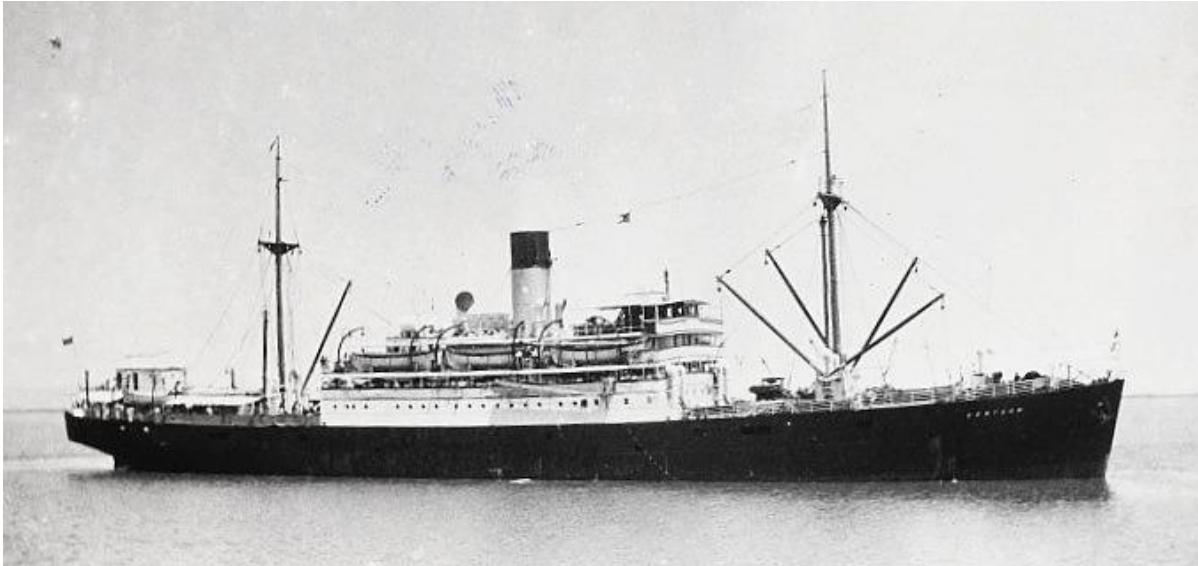


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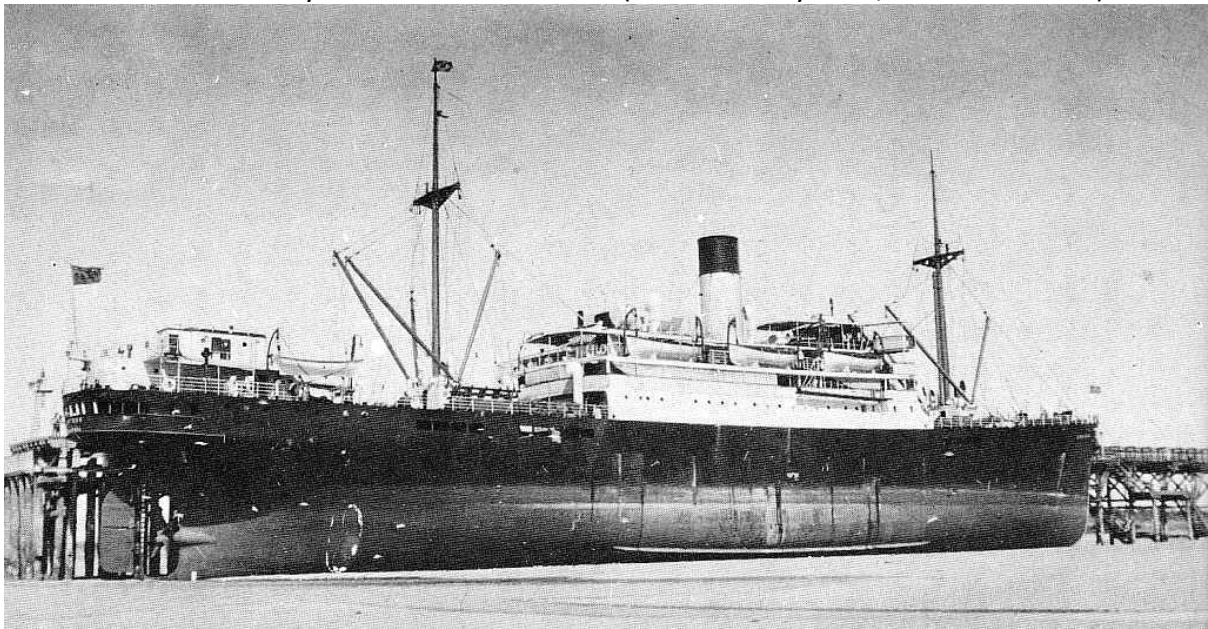
LYEEMOON flying a Jardine houseflag at Hong Kong, Dec. 1939 (D. Gammon/H. Dick\*)

**CENTAUR** (1924-43) 3066/24-8 (1.sc. m.s., 315.7 x 48.2', 6cy/355nhp/11k by Burmeister & Wain; pass. 50 1<sup>st</sup>, 22 2<sup>nd</sup> plus t/d 450 cattle)

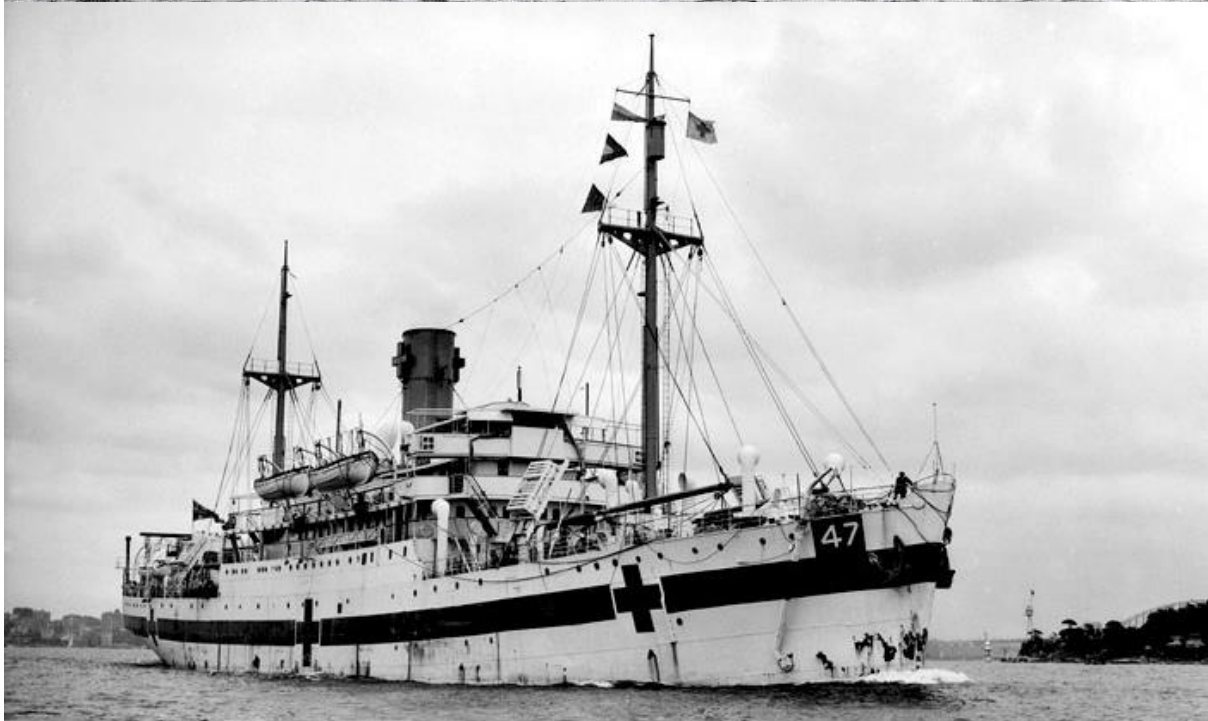
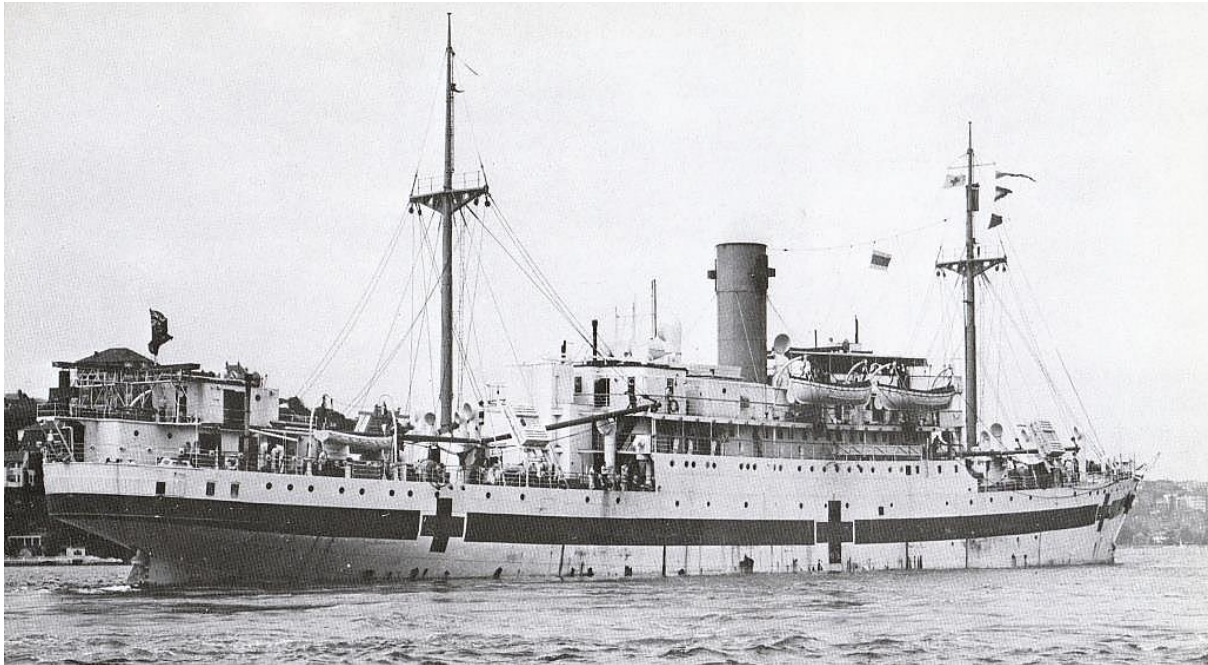
Built by Scott's Eng. & S.B. Co. Ltd, Greenock for OSSC. 2/12/24 ex Singapore for Fremantle (19/12) on maiden voyage. 1938 rev. 3,222 grt. 9/39 req. by MOWT. 13/1/42 arrived from Fremantle from Singapore, then to NW (Derby) only. 29/5/42 t/f to ASCB. 6/10/42 sailed Fremantle for Melbourne, then 11/42 on supply run to Qld and Port Moresby. 9/1/43 t/f to CWA (Naval Board) for conversion to hospital ship by United Ship Services Ltd, Melbourne. 12/3/43 comm. as AHS-47. 14/5/43 at 04.10 o/v Sydney-Port Moresby torpedoed and set on fire by I-177 (Nakagawa) and sank in 3 minutes off Stradbroke Island, Qld (27.17S, 153.59E), 268 of 332 died. 20/12/09 rep. wrecked located at 2060m depth [NA-BT 389/6/220; Log, May 1990: 69-70; Milligan & Foley, *AHS Centaur: The Myth of Immunity*, 1993; wiki]



CENTAUR off Wyndham in OSSC service (Frank Bunney colln/SLWA4383B240).



CENTAUR at Broome (N.Smith/Milligan & Foley).



CENTAUR in Sydney Harbour as hospital ship AHS-47 (Aust. Army Archives/AWM P444/181)

**GORGON** (1933-64) 3533/33-10 (1-sc.m.s., 320.3 x 51.2', 6cy/580nhp by Burmeister & Wain; pass. 138 1<sup>st</sup>, 24 2<sup>nd</sup> class plus t/d cattle)

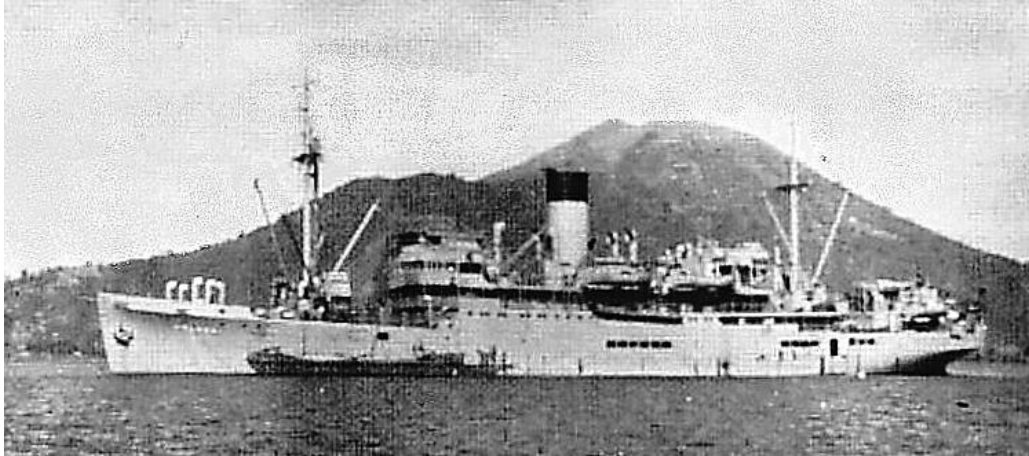
Built by Caledon S.B. & Eng. Co. Ltd, Dundee (#344) for OSSC & WASNC (jointly), Liverpool. 12/12/33 arrived Fremantle from Singapore on maiden voyage. 1936 OSSC sole owner. 1/40 req. by MOWT. 1/2/42 arrived Singapore from Fremantle in convoy MS-1 – 12/2/42 evacuated to Fremantle (20/2). 3/42 at disposal of ASCB for NW-Fremantle cattle trade. 9/42 sailed Fremantle for transfer to supply

run from Sydney to NQ and Papua (Milne Bay). 14/3/43 set on fire and disabled during air attack on Milne Bay (6 dead, 28 wounded) – 30/4 arrived Brisbane in tow for repairs. 30/11/43 resumed supply run to PNG. 5/45 at Morotai, 7/45 at Torokina. 3/9/45 arrived Sydney from Lae and laid up for refit. 5/2/46 ex Sydney for Fremantle to resume Singapore line. 3/46 released back to owners. 4/61 special survey by Taikoo. 21/7/64 last (c.280<sup>th</sup>) voyage from Fremantle for Singapore (c.31/7). 10/8/64 arrived HK for breaking up by Leung Yau Shipbreaking Co. Ltd (£49,250). [NA-BT 389/14/89, Gill, 524n4, clydebuilt.co.uk]

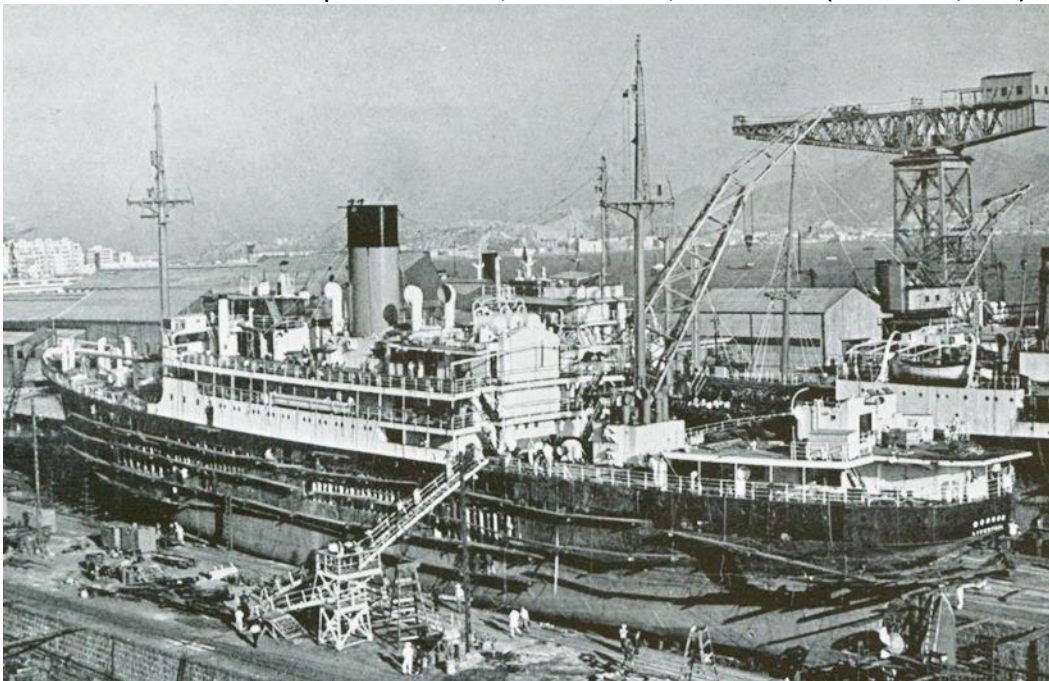


GORGON postwar (from an official postcard).)

**CHARON** (1936-64) 3703/36-12 (1-sc.m.s., 320.3 x 51.2'; 6cy/580nhp by Burmeister & Wain)  
 Built by Caledon S.B. & Eng. Co. Ltd, Dundee (#357) for OSSC, Liverpool. 12/2/37 arrived Fremantle from Singapore on maiden voyage. 1/40 req. by MOWT. 30/1/42 convoy MS-3 to Sunda Strait and Batavia (Tanjung Priok). [Gill, 525n5]. [Reports 18/3/42 allocated to RAN as victualling stores issuing ship HMAS CHARON not substantiated – remained under civilian control]. 24/3/42 at Melbourne via Fremantle for docking and repairs (to 30/4), then via Sydney 1-21/5) to Fremantle where 10/6 taken over by ASCB for NW cattle trade until 2/10/42. 22-31/10/42 at Sydney, then on supply run to NQ and Papua, by 1945 from Sydney to Oro Bay, Torokina (twice) and Rabaul. 12/12/45 arrived Sydney for refit. 9/2/46 ex Sydney for Fremantle to resume commercial service (22/2 for Singapore). 27/6/46 at Singapore reverted to owners. 26/9/56 briefly stranded at Geraldton, WA with ballast tank damage, repaired by Taikoo. 3/60 special survey. 18/5/64 arrived Singapore on final 250<sup>th</sup> voyage and 22/5 delivery for £47,213 (\$375,000) to Malayan Shipbreakers Ltd at Lim Chu Kang (on Johore Strait), Singapore [ST, 19/5/64], but resold to Chan Kai Kit, HK/Taipeh and by 7/64 in Outer Roads as SENG KONG No.1 (Panama flag). Late 1964 under arrest by Govt of Singapore at Singapore and repossessed for local demolition. 8/65 scrapping began at Singapore by Lim Bee Co. [MN Jan. 1965; BT 389/6/304]



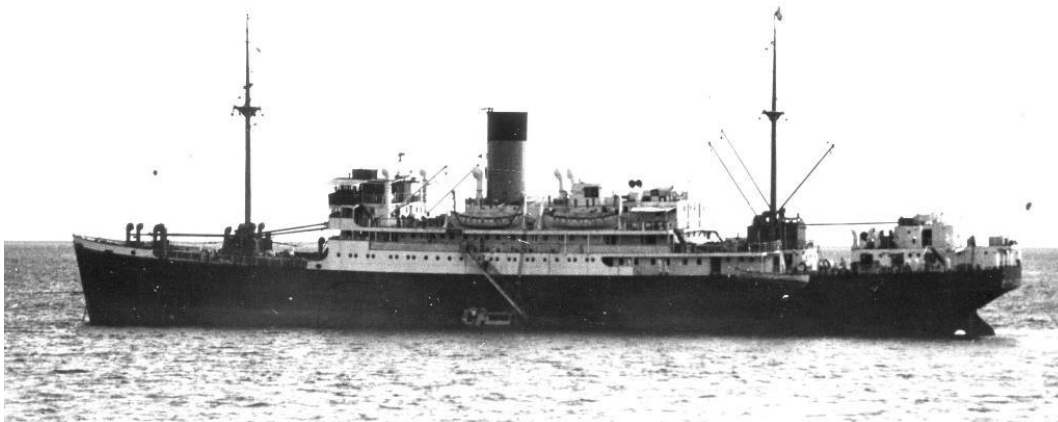
HMAS CHARON at Simpson Harbour, New Britain, Nov. 1945 (AWM099/262)



**CHARON** in Taikoo Dock, 1957, for renewal of shell plating (Taikoo Dockyard)



CHARON postwar (WA Museum).



SENG KONG No. 1 ex CHARON off Singapore, 1964 (now green funnel) (George Wilson).

**CENTAUR** (1964-85) 8262/64-1 (2-sc.m.s., 480.9 x 66.3'; 2 x 11cy/18020kw by Burmeister & Wain; 196 pass., 700 cattle/4500 sheep)

Built by John Brown & Co. Ltd, Clydebank (#722, contract £1.5m) for OSSC, Liverpool. 20/1/64 sailed Liverpool on maiden voyage to Sydney (23/2/64) where on charter to Commonwealth of Australia as floating trade mission to Hong Kong and Japan. 27/5/64 first sailing Fremantle to Singapore, Port Swettenham and Penang. 1973 t/f Ocean Tpt & Tdg Co. Ltd, Liverpool. 1973 t/f to China Mutual S.N. Co. Ltd, Liverpool. 1973 t/f to Eastern Fleets Ltd (Straits Steamship Co. Ltd (64.5%), managers), Singapore. 1977/8 t/f to Blue Funnel (SEA) Pte Ltd, Singapore. 15/9/82 last voyage Fremantle-Singapore. 10/82 chartered for 12 months with option to purchase to St Helena Shipping Co. Ltd, Bristol and 5/11/82 sailed Cape Town to commence St Helena-UK service. After option not taken up, 12/12/83 arrived Singapore, then one return voyage to Fremantle, before laid up. 1985 sold to Shanghai Hai Xing Shg Co. (COSCO), Shanghai r. HAI LONG (unconfirmed). 1986 r. HAI DA and deployed in Shanghai-HK service. 1999 t/f to China Shg Devt Co. Ltd, Shanghai. 2/06 under demolition by Xinhua Shangshui Shipbreaking Co. at Xinhui, Guangdong (about 8 km south of Guangzhou). [Based on clydeships.co.uk and smaritime.com entries with some corrections]



CENTAUR on trials (Ocean T&T via Clydeships)



CENTAUR anchored at St. Helena Island in late-1982 (Peter Neaum/Wikipedia).



HAI DA ex CENTAUR at Hong Kong in Shanghai Hai Xing colours, 'SHX' lettering and anchor logo on the funnel instead of a star, 1986 (Albert Novelli via Clydeships)



HAI DA at Hong Kong (Donald Anderson).

## F. West Australian Steam Navigation Co. Ltd (1886-1936)

*The Brisbane Courier* (22 April 1884: 6) reported as follows from a Singapore correspondent: "A steamship company has been formed in Perth, Western Australia, to trade between that colony and Singapore. Now it must be remembered that Singapore is a great mart for sandalwood which comes from Western Australia and is brought here by schooners which take back Straits produce, such as rice, gum, tapioca sago, gutta percha, dye stuffs, etc. Then it must be remembered that we get large numbers of horses from Shark's Bay, Cossack, and other newly created townships in Western Australia. The horse trade is wonderfully lucrative, but is in the hands of a few. The same may be said of the sandalwood trade. In consequence of the value of this traffic, the West Australian Steamship Company have arranged that then s.s. *Natal* shall run between Fremantle and Singapore, calling in at Geraldton, Sharks Bay, Roebuck Bay, and Batavia. The *Natal* is to leave Fremantle on the 18<sup>th</sup> March for this port. The *Natal* is subsidised by the Australian Government to the extent of £1,000 a trip, and the Straits Settlement Government have granted a subsidy of £100 a trip which will be for the mail carrying. It is expected that the trade between here and Western Australia will develop into such proportions as to soon justify the company in laying on another steamer which may be expected after the second trip of the *Natal*. The agents, McAlister and Co. at Singapore, tell me that they wish to start a regular Chinese coolie traffic between Singapore and Western Australia, and they expect great things from this maritime enterprise."

The consequent West Australian S.N. Co. Ltd was established in 1886 by London loading brokers Bethell & Co. (later Bethell, Gwyn & Co.) and Trinder, Anderson & Co. together with Singapore agent McAlister & Co. and local Fremantle merchants W.D. Moore & Co., J. Bateman & Co. and George Shenton & Co. As above, in 1890 Holts' Ocean S.S. Co. Ltd came in as a joint party by contribution of *Saladin* (1890) to run alongside *Australind* (1886) and also brought *Fantee* for use as a steam lighter at Cossack pending delivery of the purpose-built *Beagle* (1892) for joint account.

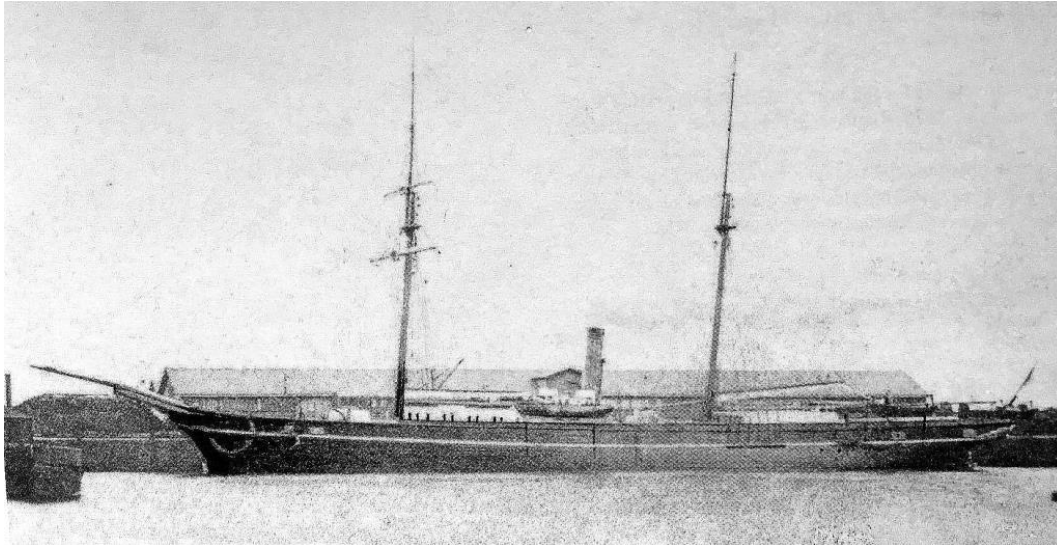
The line remained a joint venture between WASNC and OSSC until 1936. After *Minderoo* (2720/09) had become a casualty at Port Hedland in mid-September 1935, Straits Steamships' *Kepong* [see end Section E] was chartered as a temporary replacement pending delivery of a sistership to *Gorgon* (1933). In January 1936, *Minderoo* was sold to breakers in Japan. In July WASNC announced its intention to liquidate and to cease operations in Western Australia as of 14 November. WASNC's joint share in *Gorgon* was sold to OSSC, which with *Centaur* and *Charon* (under construction) thereby took over full rights to the WA-Singapore trade. *Kepong* took her last sailing from Fremantle on 6 January 1937 and the new *Charon* replaced her in the trade later that month.

### Fleet list

**NATAL** (1883-87) 734/1865 (i.s.s., 205.9 x 27.8', C.2-cyl/120hp/10k by Day, Summers & Co.)

Built by C.A. Day & Co., Southampton (#25) for Union S.S. Co., Southampton for South African coastal service as *NATAL* (2-cyl. simple, 100 hp by builder). 1874 re-engined (2-cyl. compound by builder). 9/83 sold to Trinder, Anderson & Co., London and refitted for Fremantle-Singapore line. 4/1/84 sailed London for Fremantle, Geraldton and Cossack (for the Kimberley) with emigrants. 1/87 laid up at Singapore. 2/87 sold at Singapore to Chinese-Arab syndicate (Goh Siam Swee reg. owner), Bangkok. 21/12/88 at

Singapore from Bangkok and laid up. 9/89 sold in Singapore at auction for \$33,000 to Syed Mahomed bin Ahmed Bahasin. 1890 sold to Ang Eng Tjio & Thio Koei Liong, Banjarmasin for Bmn-Sby-Sing trade r. SRI BANDJAR. 9/98 sold at auction to Ang Lim Thye & Lim Ho Puah, Singapore for \$30,000. 1899 sold to ?? r. LIBERTAS. 1899/00 sold to Mendezona & Co., Manila r. ALAVA. 1901 sold to Urrutia & Co. c.1902 laid up at Cavite. 26/9/05 blown ashore at Cavite - refloated and 31/7/06 left Cavite in tow of *Taming* for Hong Kong. LPV 1914 still listed to Leonardo Le Breton, Manila (laid up). [1865-1883 = Newell, Union-Castle, 1999]



NATAL in Union Line colours (Newell-A. Greenway).

**AUSTRALIND** (1886-04) 1050/86-9L (i.s.s/schr rig, 224.8 x 32.0', T3cy/159nhp)

Built by Blackwood & Gordon, Glasgow (#212) and reg. at London to. Bethell & Co. and Trinder, Anderson & Co. (jointly), London. 29/11/86 sailed London via Plymouth, Singapore for Fremantle (11/2/87). 1887 reg. at Fremantle as 1/1887 to W.D. Moore, Geog. Shenton & Charles Bethell (London). 9/87 t/f to WASNC. 5/03 advertised for sale, 1/6/03 arrived Singapore on last WASN voyage, sold to W.P. Waddell, Singapore and 12/8/03 cleared for Bangkok. 1904 sold to F.M. Gracey, Olympia (Wa., US) r. OHIO. Late 1904 sold to D.W. Deshler, Kobe r. OHIO No. 1. 1907 sold to American Tdg Co., Shanghai r. OHIO. 1908 sold to Ku Ti Sang (Thoresen & Co., mgrs), Shanghai r. TUNG YUE. 1911 t/f to China Commercial S.N. Co., Shanghai. 28/11/13 at 11.28pm o/v Tengchow (Shantung)-Newchwang (E.F. Thoresen, Master) struck Reef Island and wrecked near Port Arthur, 34 saved, 174 lost [NCH 20/12/1913; also Dick & Kentwell, Sold East, Schell 1886].

#### THE S.S. AUSTRALIND: ACCOUNT OF THE LAUNCH

*The Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth, WA), Wed. 10 Nov 1886 Page 2.

"Messrs. C. Bethell & Co., of 110 Fenchurch Street, London, have kindly furnished us with the following account of the launch of the steamer *Australind*:

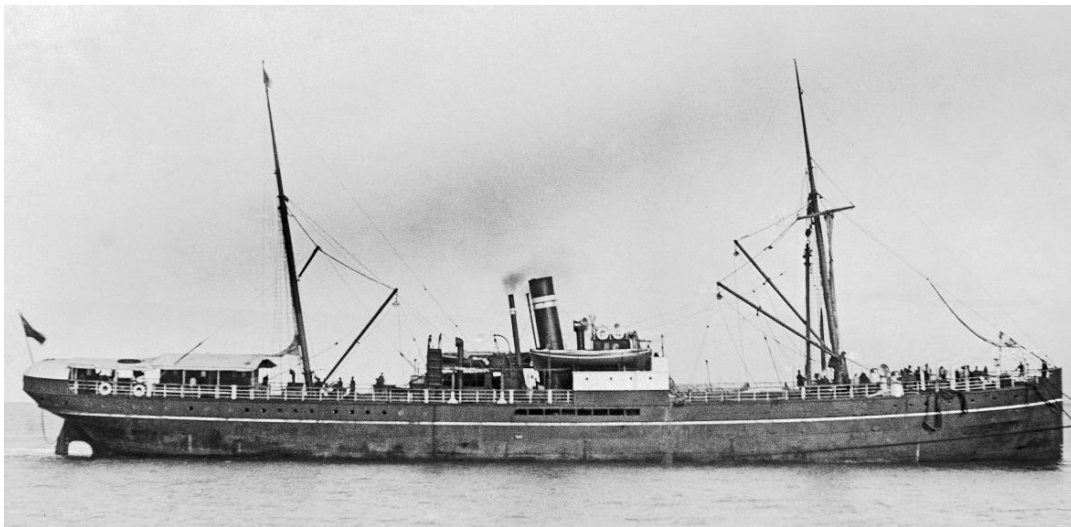
"She has been fitted up in a first-class manner, with large and superior accommodation for first and third class passengers, including all the latest improvements for the comfort and convenience of passengers, a special feature in this vessel being the excellent ventilation for the cabin, and the bathing and sanitary convenience so much required in an Eastern climate. Jarrah, the West Australian mahogany, has been used wherever possible in the decoration of the

cabins and the appointments of the ship, and she is besides to be fitted throughout with the electric light, which should add very much to the popularity of the steamer among passengers. This vessel is intended to convey large shipments of live stock, and suitable accommodation for their safe conveyance has also been provided for on main and 'tween decks. A steam launch has also been supplied, which will be a great convenience to passengers landing at the various ports on the route.

"This steamer is constructed of a light draught specially to enter the various ports of call in Western Australia. Her first port of call in West Australia will be Derby, King Sound, near which the Kimberley goldfield (anticipated to be one of the largest in Australia) has lately been discovered. On leaving the ways she was gracefully named the *Australind* by Mrs. C. Bethell, London, wife of one of the owners. After the launch the vessel was towed into the builders' dock, where she will be fitted by the builders with triple-expansion engines of 750 horse power; diameter of cylinders, 19 in. by 30 in. and 50 in.; boilers 1501bs. pressure, having large heating surface, and it is fully expected these engines will enable her to attain a very high rate of speed, combined with a small consumption of fuel....

"The *Australind* has a large smoke-room on deck. The dining saloon is entirely apart from the sleeping cabins, an arrangement so much more desirable in hot climates. Capt. England, of the s.s. *Natal*, and his staff will be transferred to the *Australind* on her arrival at Singapore. Mr. Bethell goes out in this steamer to further the interests of the service. The *Australind* is to be registered as a local vessel in Western Australia, hailing from Fremantle.

"There were present at the launch Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Bethell, Mr. O. J. Trinder, Mr. Joan Keane (of Western Australia), Mr. and Mrs. McAlister (of Singapore), Mr. William Law and Mr. Fiune, directors of the Midland Railway of Western Australia, and others....Mr. Trinder, in returning thanks for the toast of the managing owners, stated that this service was somewhat a pet scheme of Mr. Bethell's and his own, and that they had both devoted much time and attention to the planning, etc., of the *Australind*. The builders, Messrs. Blackwood and Gordon, Mr. Trinder said, were noted as about the best in the Clyde for this class of boat, in the construction of which they had had great experience, many of the most successful steamers trading in Eastern waters having been constructed by them, and they were the builders of the steamer which was at present the favorite boat on the West Australian coast — the *Otway*."

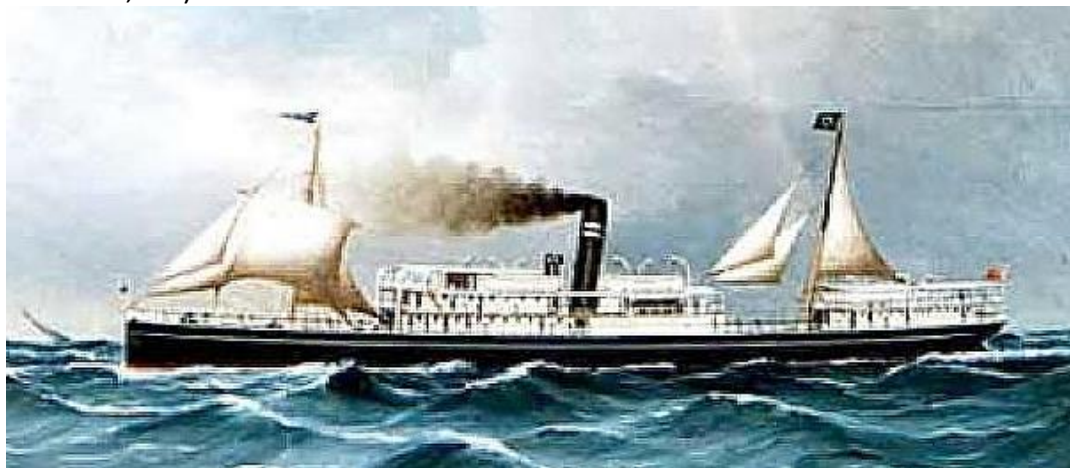


AUSTRALIND (1886) (A.C. Green/SLV)

**KARRAKATTA** (1898-01) 2091/97-12 (s.s.s., 300.0 x 42.2', T3cy/251nhp; pass. 38 first, 38 second; livestock).

Built by John Scott & Co., Kinghorn for WASNC (#100). 23/1/98 sailed Glasgow for Fremantle, 22/3 arrived Fremantle, crew paid off for Asiatic crew, 3/4 m.v. to Singapore. 1898 reg. at Fremantle as

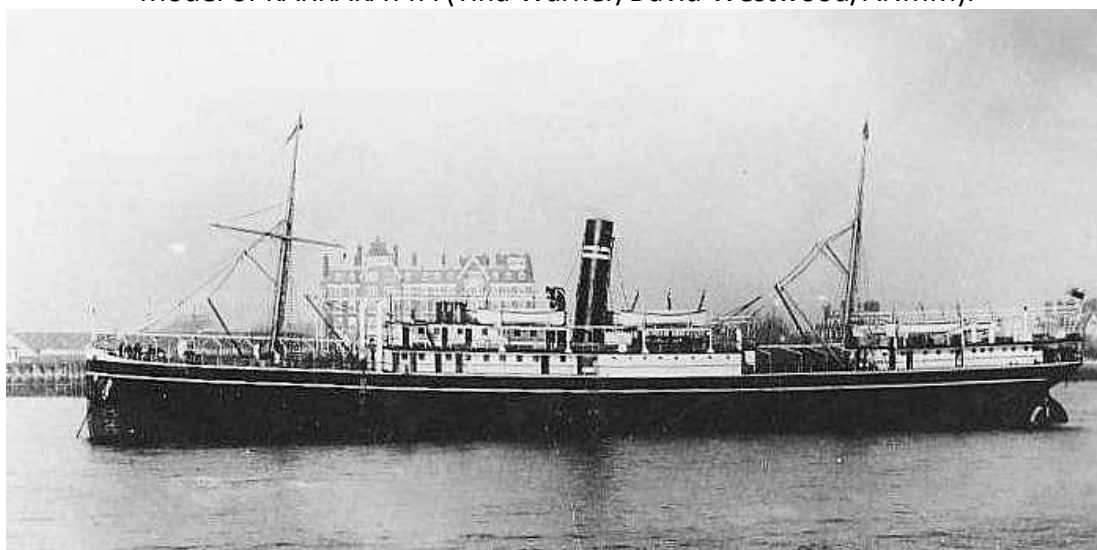
4/1898 to WASNC. 26/3/01 at 2200 hours struck uncharted rock and quickly settled off Swan Point Island at entrance to King's Sound, Derby en route Fremantle to Singapore via Broome (26/4) (ship and cargo valued at £70,000).



KARRAKATTA showing sails (W.A. Museum).

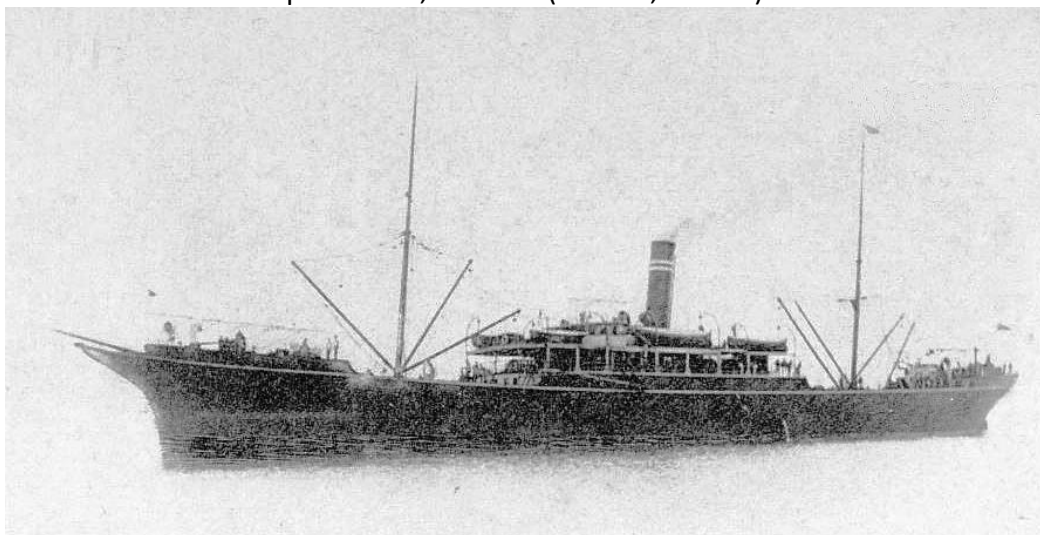


Model of KARRAKATTA (Tina Warner/David Westwood/ANMM).



KARRAKATTA (wrecksite.eu).

**MINILYA** (1901-10) 2744/96-8 (s.s.s., 313.0 x 43.0', T3cy/266nhp; pass. 60 saloon, 40 2<sup>nd</sup>)  
 Built by J. Blumer & Co., Sunderland (#135) for Successores de J.H. Andresen (1826-94) (Andresen Line), Oporto for passenger-cargo service Portugal-Brazil (Manaus)-New York-Portugal as DONA AMELIA. 6/01 sold to WASNC (Bethell, Gwyn & Co. Ltd mgrs.), London r. MINILYA. 3/8 sailed London and 23/9 arrived Fremantle for WA-Singapore trade (90 pass.) and reg. at Fremantle as 15/1901. 6/7/09 arrived Singapore and laid up for sale. 2/10 sold to Govt of Philippines for use as cables ship (incidental freight) and 23/2 cleared Singapore as RIZAL. 12/16 sold to CGTF and refitted for liner trade to Europe. 9/11/17 torpedoed by U-39 and sunk 9 miles from Cape Cavallo, Sardinia (36.53N, 05.30E).

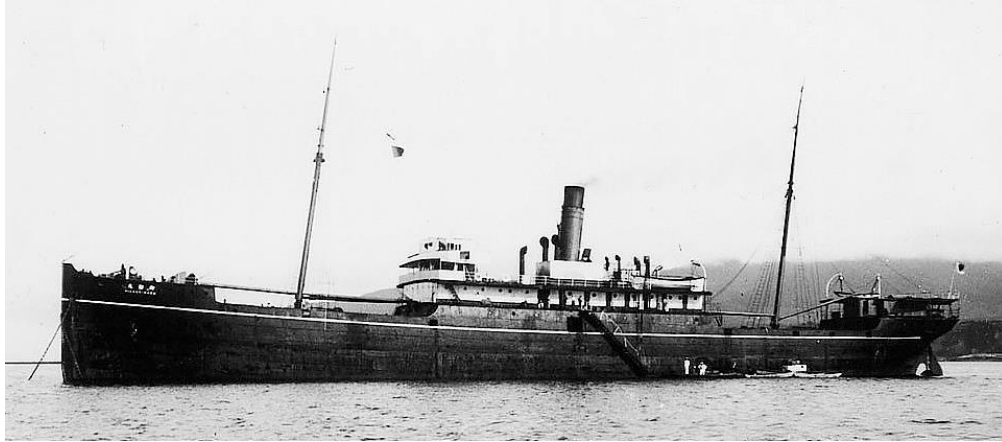


MINILYA from a postcard ([https://purl.slwa.wa.gov.au/slwa\\_b3416661\\_1](https://purl.slwa.wa.gov.au/slwa_b3416661_1)).

**PAROO** (1903-17) 2665/97-11 (s.s.s., 315.6 x 40.1', T3cy/291nhp/10k by Hutson & Son Ltd, Glasgow)  
 Built by Russell & Co., Glasgow (#415) for Australian Tpt Co. Ltd (H.C. Sleight), Melbourne and l. 14/9/97 as CAPE LEEUWIN but before completion sold to Australian United S.N. Co. Ltd, London r. PAROO. 1898 reg. at Melbourne. 5/03 sold to WASNC and reg. at Fremantle as 49/1903. 1917 - Sun Shipping Co., Ltd (Mitchell, Cotts & Co.), London, then 3/17 resold to Persian Gulf S.N. Co. Ltd, Bombay r. IRAN. 1922 sold to Okuda Yeikichi, Mikage r. MIKAGE MARU. 1926 sold to Muko Kisen K.K., Mikage. 24/10/44 o/v Moji-Manila torp. and sunk by USS *Croaker* off Cheju Do (Qualpart Is.), Korea, 27 crew lost.

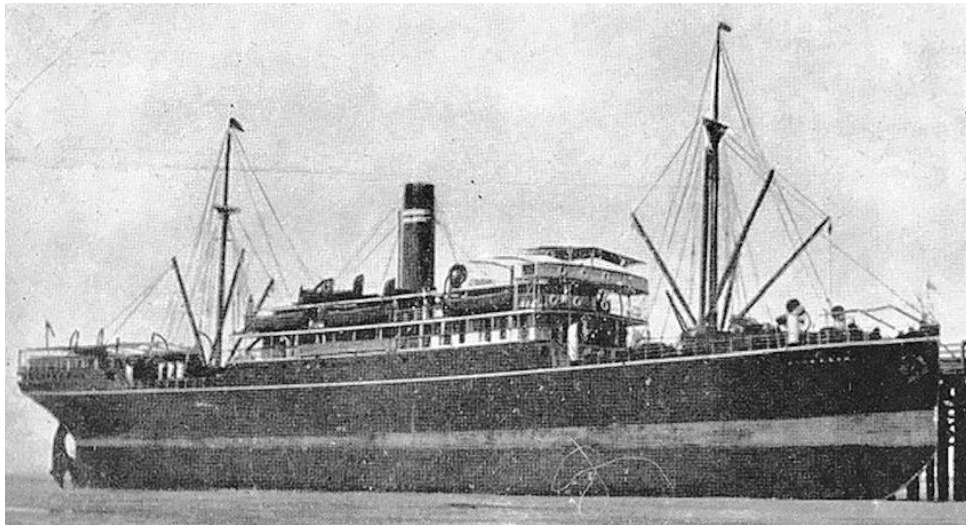


PAROO in WASN service (A.C. Green/SLV).



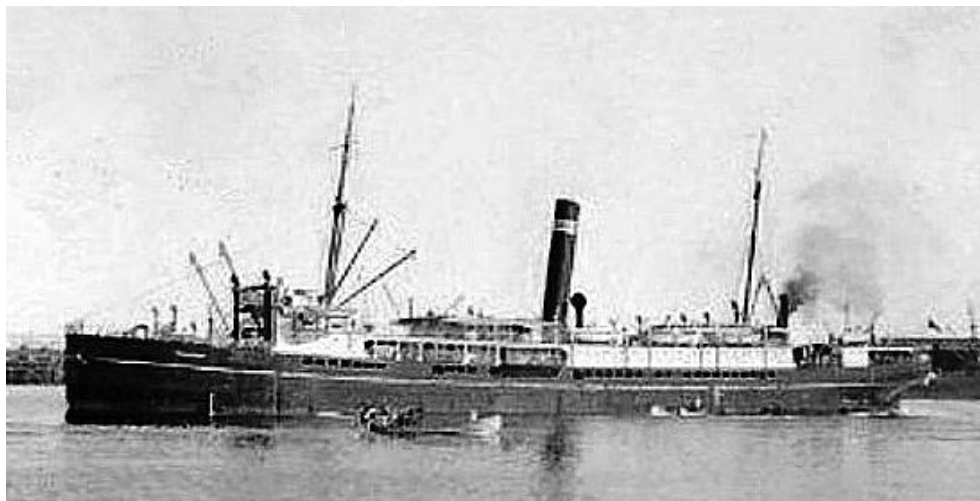
MIKAGE MARU (Uhachi Kinoshita/OCM)

**MINDEROO** (1909-36) 2720/09-4 (s.s.s., 320.2 x 44.3'; T3cy/403nhp (trials 13.3k) by Dunsmuir, Jackson & Co. Ltd, Glasgow; pass. 116 first, 60 second class; t/d 500 cattle)  
 Built by C. Connell & Co. Ltd, Glasgow (#325) for WASNC. 25/5/09 arrived Fremantle via Singapore. 1909 reg. at Fremantle as 5/1909. 5/20 reg. t/f to London. 14/9/35 engines disabled after stranding awkwardly at Port Hedland on fast falling tide — 15/9 tied up at jetty and cargo discharged, CTL. 1/36 sold to S. Sakamoto, Osaka and 5/4/36 left in tow of salvage tug *Saucy* for Shanghai and ultimate delivery at Osaka. Q3/1936 broken up at Osaka.

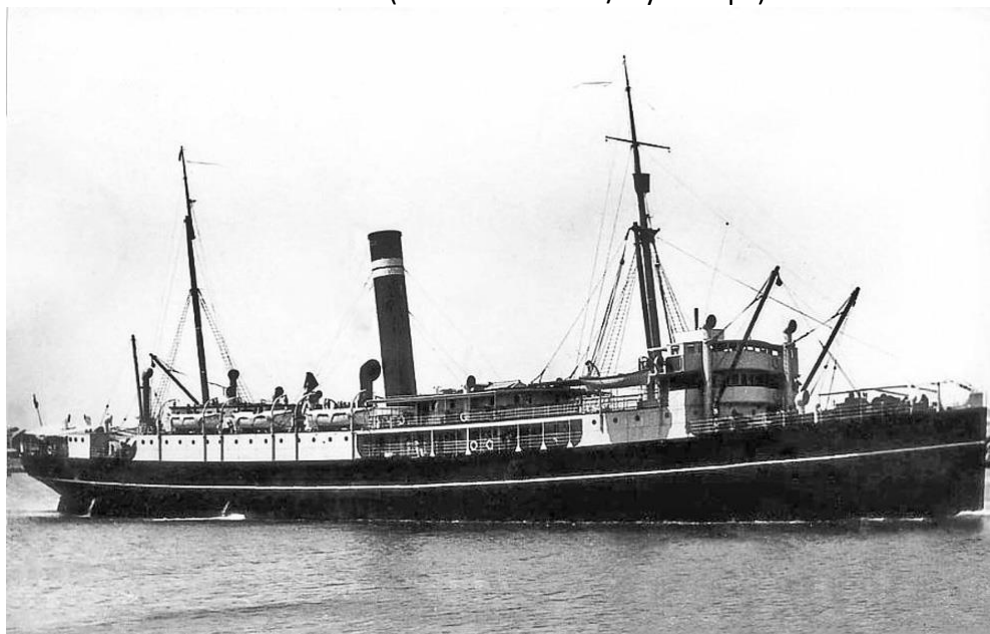


MINDEROO at jetty, high and dry at a NW Australian port (Dickson Gregory, 1928).

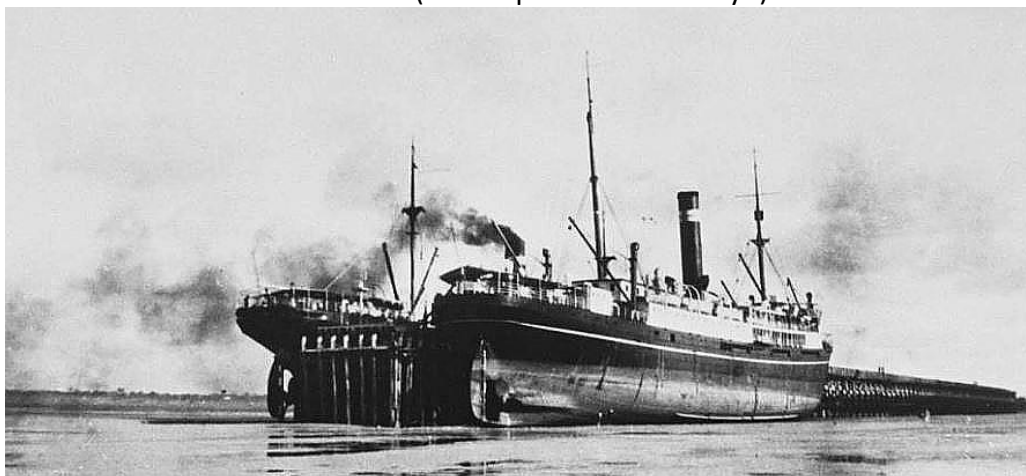
**GASCOYNE** (1922-32) 3669/07-4 (s.2-sc.s., 361 x 46.2'; 2 x T3cy/550nhp/14k (trials); pass. 12/22, 110 1<sup>st</sup>, 60 2<sup>nd</sup> class; t/d 520 cattle)  
 Built by Wm Beardmore & Co. Ltd, Glasgow (#489) for Pacific S.N. Co., Liverpool as *QUILPUE*, one of two sisters for coastal trade between Valparaiso and Callao (120 1<sup>st</sup>, 100 2<sup>nd</sup>, 300 deck pass.). 12/15 o/c to RMSPC for West Indies service. 1921 t/f to NY-Panama-Guayaquil route. 1922 laid up in UK. 7/22 sold to WASNC (reg. Liverpool), extensively refitted r. *GASCOYNE* (originally intended as 'Minilya'). 28/12/22 ex London for Fremantle (20/2/23). 11/31 rep. sold. 20/12/31 last voyage from Fremantle to Singapore (8/1/32). 29/1/32 arrived at Osaka for breaking up.



GASCOYNE (Flotilla Australia/Clydeships)



GASCOYNE (Old Ships Picture Gallery\*).



GASCOYNE and MINDEROO at Broome (SLWA).

# The Ocean Steam Ship Co. Ltd.

AND

## West Australian Steam Navigation Co. Ltd.

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**Regular Service to and from Nor'-West Ports of West Australia.**

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		Return		
£33/5/-	£36/-/-	£43/-/-	£43/-/-	£43/-/-

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#### NO EXCHANGE CHARGED

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Coastal fares and full particulars forwarded on application.

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