

**The “Pei” (北) Ships of Tientsin**  
**Chili Shantung Lines Ltd., Taku 直東輪船公司**  
**North China S.S. Co., Tientsin 北清輪船公司**

**ILLUSTRATED FLEET LIST**

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The character pei 北 (pingyin bei), means north, and Hua Pei 華北 denotes North China generally, and pei also can be an abbreviation for the capital city Peking 北京 (Beijing), for which Tientsin is the principal port. As the first part of a ship’s name, Pei therefore naturally tends to be associated with Tientsin. [However, the Tientsin geographic name Peiho 白河 (‘white river’ or baihe is not associated with the character for ‘north’.]

With the completion in Shanghai of the PEI MING in 1922, two fleets of small coastal ships registered in Tientsin with “Pei” names started to appear in Lloyd’s Register, those of Chili Shantung Lines Ltd., based in Taku but with no street address stated, and North China S.S. Co. headquartered on the French Bund in Tientsin. Both fleets were used for passenger and cargo sailings to Newchwang and Dairen. Given the similarity of services operated, it is likely that there was a degree of cooperation or coordination between the two firms, but Chili Shantung Lines seemed to pride itself of its separate existence. Following acquisition of the big PEI CHIN in 1938, a photographer was engaged to photograph three vessels of that company, and the enlarged photographs were prepared as a presentation set, with a notation in Chinese on the top photograph of PEI CHIN that it was taken on 15/2/28 at the entrance to Taku, being the registered location of Pei Pu Navigation 北普輪船 (Northern General Navigation), which may be taken as the company’s later Chinese name.

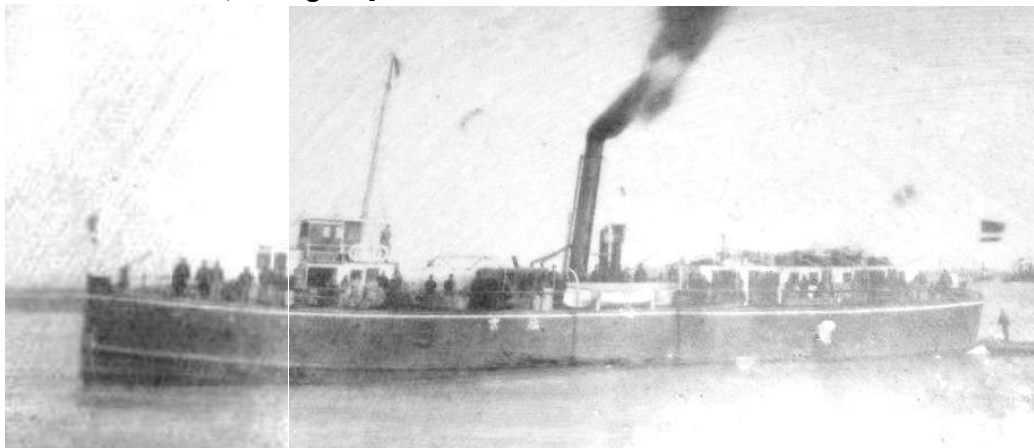
Following the hostilities of the late 1930s and World War II, out of the two fleets, including one Chili Shantung vessel that did not have a “Pei” name, only the 667gt PEI MING is confirmed as remaining afloat. A sturdy vessel, usually depicted in photographs as a focus of activity, she came under the control of C.Y. Tung’s Chinese Maritime Trust and in the late 1940s was one of very few ships operating

passenger sailings on what was formerly the North China line of well-known coastal companies between Tientsin and Shanghai. Two more ships were acquired for Chili Shantung Lines in the late 1940s and were registered in Shanghai, and PEI MING and PEI CHING escaped to Hong Kong in 1949 but they later were sold for scrap, bringing the known “Pei” ships story to its conclusion.

**Chili Shantung Lines Ltd., Taku 直東輪船公司**  
The China Yearbook 1936 says **Chih Tung S.S. Co.**

**PEI CHING/ (PEI KING)/ (PEKING) (?- ?) 441/11 C2cy**

Built by Nicholas Tsu, Shanghai. First mentioned in LR 1924 for CSL, 1930s operating Tientsin/Newchwang. Still as such 1940, but no longer existing by 1947. [Note N. Tsu was also manager of China United Nav. Co. Ltd., Shanghai.]



Probable PEI CHING at Taku 15/2/28 (gucn.com).

**PEI MING 北銘 (1922-52) 667/22**

Built by Huh Hsing E. & S.B. Works, Shanghai for CSL as PEI MING, 1930s operating Tientsin/Newchwang. 1947 mgrs CMT, operating Tientsin/Shanghai. 1952 broken up at Hong Kong.



PEI MING operating for “Pei Pu Nav.” (7788.com).



Operating for "Pei Pu Nav." (7788.com).



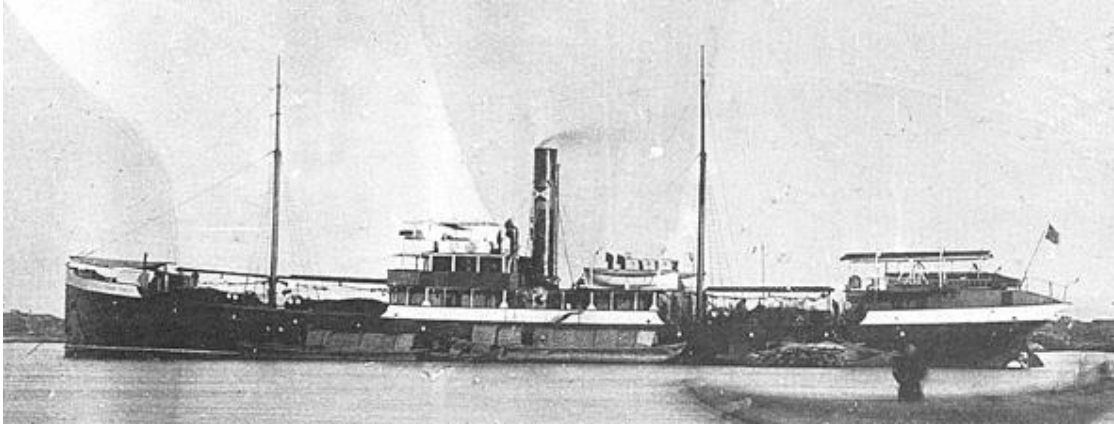
Postwar with new foc'stle & mainmast (SK\*)

R:

**PEI CHANG** (1923-31) 1095/03-4 T3cy

1903 Built by Fevigs Jernskibsbyggeri, Fevig for D/S A/S Providence (Hans Kiær & Co.), Drammen as PROVIDENCE. 1910 Sold to Hans C. H. Kaad, Sydney r. PROVIDENCE A.

1911 Sold to Robbie, Kaad & Co. Ltd, Levuka, registered in Brisbane. 1915 Sold to Hans Kiær & Co. A/S, Drammen, r. PROVIDENCE. 10/17 owners sold to H. M. Wrangell & Co. A/S, Haugesund. 2/23 sold for GBP 13.500 to Wang Nai Ying, Hong Kong. 1923 sold to CSL r. PEI CHANG. 18/1/31 wrecked about 4 nm east of Chimatao lighthouse, Chefoo.



PEI CHANG as PROVIDENCE (<http://skipshistorie.net/Drammen>).

**PING TSI** (1923-37) 1832/02 T3cy

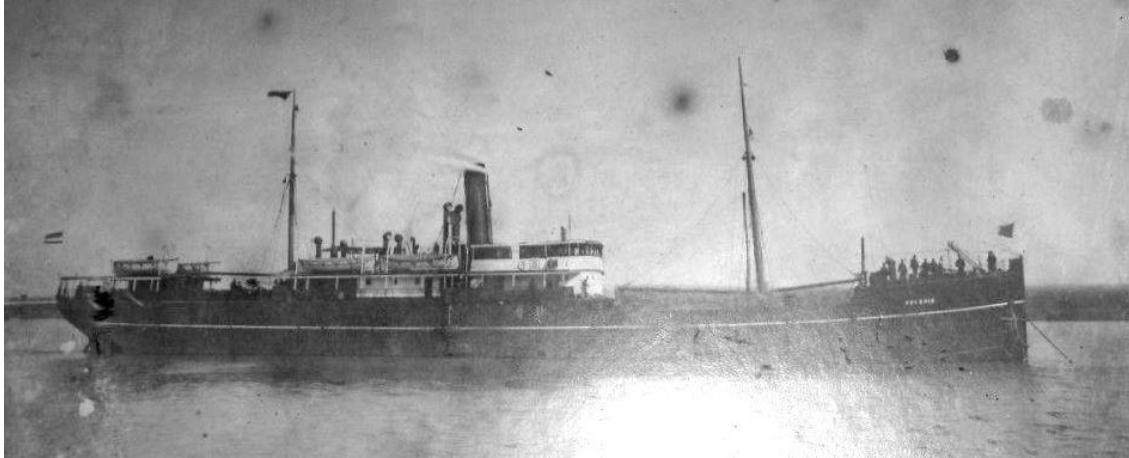
Built by Greenock & Grangemouth D.Y. Co., Greenock for Mersey S.S. Co. (Leech Harrison & Forward mgrs.), Liverpool as MAZAGAN. 8/6/05 sold to Nippon Yusen Kaisha, Tokyo r. SAGAMI MARU (1934g). 31/3/23 contributed as a material asset on establishment to Kinkai Yusen Kaisha, Tokyo for Japan/N. China service. 12/32 sold at Tientsin to CSL r. PING TSI (1832g). 1937 sunk as block ship at Nantao. [Kizu NYK History, TheShipsList – NYK].



SAGAMI MARU at Dairen (from a postcard).

**PEI CHIN** (1928-37) 1613/03 T3cy

Built by Rickmers Schiffbau A.G., Geestemunde (#127) for Rickmers Rhed. A.G., Bremen as DOROTHEA RICKMERS. 18/11/03 purchased by Norddeutscher Lloyd, Bremen r. ANGHIN. 9/14 interned in Surabaya. 8/9/19 taken over by The Shipping Controller, Singapore, mgrs. British India S.N. Co. 1922 sold to Yah Kee & Co., Shanghai r. HUA MING. 1928 sold to CSL r. PEI CHIN, operating Tientsin/Shanghai. 12/37 sunk as blockship.



Newly acquired PEI CHIN "at Taku 15/2/28 for Pei Pu Nav." (gucn.com).

**PEI CHING** (1947-51) 1129/01 T3cy

Built by Trondheims Mek. Vaerks, Trondheim for J.C. Gjertsen, Norway as BALDER. 1914 t/f to Dpsk. Balders Rederi (Schjelderup & Schjott mgrs), Norway. 1918 t/f to A/S D/S Balder (A. Schjelderup mgr), Norway, later restyled Albert Schjelderup Rederi A/S (same mgr), Norway. 1946 sold to A. Coumandreas & C. Pappas, Greece r. CAPE MATAPAN. 1947 sold to CSL (CMT mgrs), Shanghai r. PEI CHING. 1951 t/f to Pacific Union Marine Corp., Panama r. NORTHERN PHOENIX. 29/8/54 stranded at Hong Kong - 15/10 refloated. 28/3/56 delivered to Mollers for scrap.



BALDER (<http://www.warsailors.com/singleships/balder.html>).

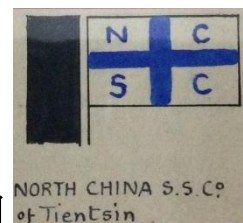
**PEI TA** (1949- ?) 1030/95 T3cy

Built by Howaldtswerke, Kiel for M. Jebsen, Apenrade as VORWARTS. 1911 sold to Hakuyo Kisen (later Shosen) K.K., Japan r. TENBU MARU. 1934 sold to Ying Kee Hong, Taiwan r. HSIN AN. The Manila Times 10/6/48 says HSINAN one of five Chinese chips recovered by SCAP, owners at first unlocated, vessel

entrusted to China Merchants S.N. Co for operation. 1948 owner identified as Wang Chung-yin, studying for Buddhist priesthood, who then deeded the ship, worth US\$100,000 to the Yingchi charity, relinquishing all claims. 1949 sold to CSL (CMT mgrs), Shanghai r. PEI TA. No evidence of Taiwan registry. RLR 1959.



TENBU MARU, later PEI TA (1916 J. Steamships Register).



**North China S.S. Co., Tientsin 北清輪船公司**

Address French Bund, Tientsin

Principally operating Tientsin-Newchwang (Yingkou)

The North China Steamer Co. same *hanzi*) was floated in Shanghai in August 1868 with about one-third Chinese ownership, which came to be led by Tong King-sing (*see* Trautman & Co. history). In February 1871 agreement was reached for Jardine, Matheson & Co. to take over the company's two steamers and wharves, but the Chinese shareholders resisted a full takeover, so the firm evidently maintained a continued existence in some form – until about 1897 the Qing dynasty did not allow firms, apart from China Merchants S.N. Co., to register Chinese-flag steamships. By 1906 the Newchwang-based F.D. Farmer (*see* 'Little Pohai' list) was listed as General Manager of a firm of the same name and using the same *hanzi*, though when he started acquiring ships in 1912 they were not registered under this name. By this time the name was in use for a Japanese-sponsored *gongsi* set up in Dairen in June 1911 (*see* 'Little Pohai' list) and which in 1913 evolved into the fully-fledged firm Dairen Kisen Gomei Kaisha as a Sino-Japanese-joint venture.

The next incarnation as the North China Steamship Co. Ltd and with a different houseflag was a Tientsin-based joint-stock shipping company that probably started around 1919 at the height of the post-WW1 boom – the Chinese shareholders may have hived off from North China Steamer Co. on

establishment of Dairen Kisen. From the outset there were Japanese links. Though not listed in Lloyd's Register until 1923/4, the first two ships look to have been the wooden 447-ton *Pei An* (1917) and the 452-ton *Pei Lee* (1912), both ex-Japanese. Then in 1922 came the 996-ton *Pei Kong* (1919), also ex Japanese, and in 1923 the 1380-ton Norwegian freighter *Hellas* (1905), followed in mid-1924 by the 2780-dwt *Pei Tai* (1879), formerly a collier on the Australian coast. These five ships plied between Shanghai, Tientsin and Newchwang (Yingkow). Until August 1929, the Shanghai agent was Shawhsing Steamship (NCH 27/8/29).

In September 1936 it was announced that due to keen competition from Japanese shipping and a book loss of \$300,000, perhaps incurred by the stranding in June 1936 and subsequent salvage of *Pei An* ex *Taroola*, the company, then capitalised at \$500,000 would be sold to the Sino-Japanese firm Yung Yuan S.S. Co. in Dairen with a contract due to be signed on 6 September. Apparently, it had been intended that a recent \$200,000 loan from Japanese interests would be converted to augmented capital but it was later reported [China Weekly Review, 12/9/36] that NCSSC and its five ships would be reorganised as a Sino-Japanese business – in 1939 *Pei Ping* was sold to Yung Yuan so perhaps there had been some overlapping shareholding. From late 1937 the NCSSC ships were reported to be under Japanese control and, although not shown as such in Lloyd's Register, would have been sailing under the ?? Chinese flag. *Pei Kong* and *Pei Hua*, the last two ships known to be still operating, were sunk in 1945 and there is no evidence of subsequent activity.

**PEI AN** (c.1919-28) 447/17 (wood, 162.6 x 25.0', C2cy/42nhp by Oka Tekkosho, Osaka)  
Built by Matsuzaki Yasaburo, Ominato for Tosa Unyu K.K., Kochi as TOSA MARU No.6. First listed for NCSS L24. 1928 sold to Hai An Shipping Co. r. HAI AN. 8/10/28 o/v Lungkow-Tientsin (ballast sand) foundered at Taipingwan [Schell].

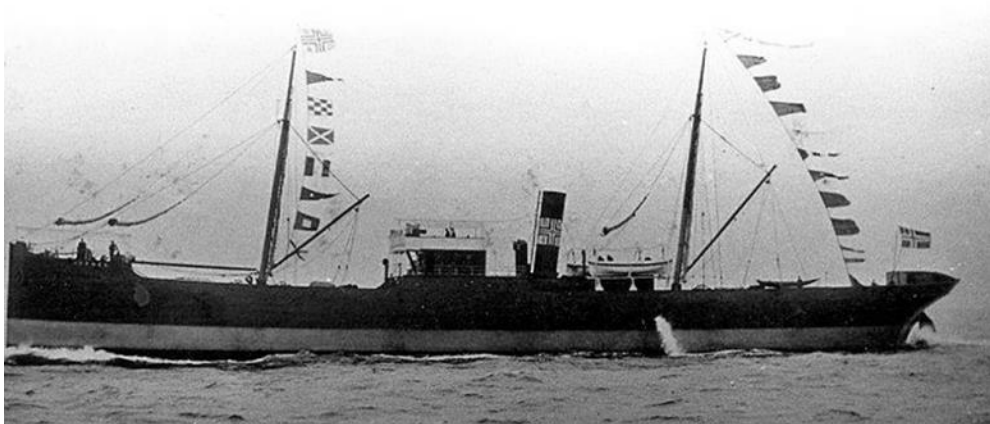
**PEI LEE** (c.1919-25) 452/12 (154.1 x 21.7', T3cy/50nhp)  
Built by Nagata Sanjuro, Osaka for Nagata Sanjuro, Nishinomiya as NAGATA MARU No. 25. First listed for NSCC L24 as PEI LEE. 1925 taken over by Govt of Fengtien (Chang Tso-lin). RLR 1928. [Richard Wright has noted that Manchuria Daily News, 11/7/1925 states "PEI LEE for Peifang Hangyeh Kungssu passed into possession of Chang Tso-lin. Converted to man-of-war at Taku, put in to Newchwang 7th. Transferred to Yingkuo Fishery Office. 278 tons". Subsequently possibly r. PU WEI, as Chinese Maritime Customs Decennial Report 1922-1931 Vol 1, for Tientsin, p. 413 gives a vessel with length about 150' (vs. PEI LEE registered length 154') as the largest of the Coast Defence Bureau ships operating from Taku (dated June 1932). Armament 1x6pdr only].

**PEI KONG** 北康 (1922-45) 996 (later 1015)/19 (210.0 x 31.0', T3cy/241nhp Hamada IW, Kobe)  
Built by Nitta Co., Osaka for Nitta Kisen K.K., Mibu (Ehime Pref.) as BANYEI MARU No.17. 1922 sold to NCSS r. PEI KONG, 1930s operating Tientsin-Newchwang. Photographic evidence shows known immediately prewar under the Japanese reading of the name as HOKKO GO [PEI = 'HO(KU), KONG = KO, GO = MARU]. 12/41 reported captured by IJN in Yangtse delta. 22/7/45 sunk by air attack in position 35.10N 129.30E SE coast Chosen (20km E. of Pusan).



HOKKO GO in ice at Taku about 1938, and being detained by IJN Gunboat 131 in the Lower Yangtze in 12/41 (Ebay 1/19, S. Aoki, Ships of the World 12/69).

**PEI HUA** (1923-45) 1380/05 (260.0 x 38.0', T3cy/156nhp by G. Clark Ltd, Sunderland)  
 Built by Wood, Skinner & Co, Newcastle (#131) for D/S A/S Hellas (Bruusgaard, Kiøsterud & Co. mgrs), Drammen, as HELLAS. 1909 t/f to Bruusgaard, Kiøsterud D/S A/S (same mgrs), Drammen. 1923 sold for NOK 429.000 to NCSS r. PEI HUA. 1930s operating Tientsin-Dairen-Shanghai. Late-1930s under Japanese control as HOKKA GO [Japanese reading of the name]. 6/42 alloc. to Chuka Rinsen. 23/2/45 (also given as 13/3) o/v Shanghai-Wenchow sunk by U. S. Army air attack south of Chusan Islands, Chekiang, China (29.14N, 122.03E) [Schell]  
[\[https://skipshistorie.net/Drammen/DRA438%20Bruusgaard%20Kiosterud/Tekster/DRA43819060200000%20HELLAS.htm\]](https://skipshistorie.net/Drammen/DRA438%20Bruusgaard%20Kiosterud/Tekster/DRA43819060200000%20HELLAS.htm).

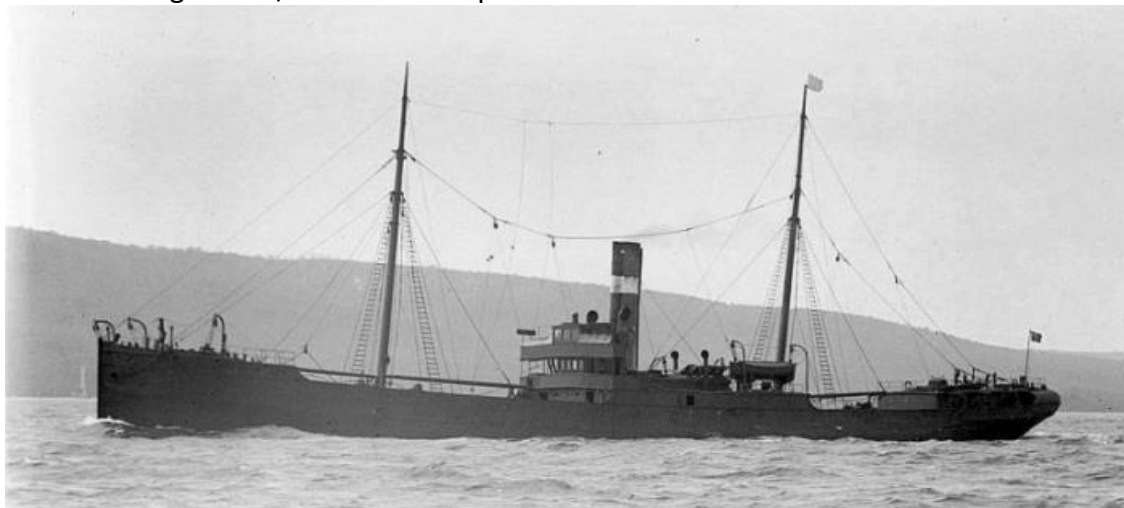


The slightly smaller HERMES was earlier built for the same owners by the same yard (WSPL).

**PEI TAI (TEI)** (1925-35) 2044/79 (285.0 x 35.5', C2cy/9k by R. & W. Hawthorn, Newcastle)  
 Built by A. Leslie & Co., Newcastle (#204) for J.D. Milburn and reg. at Newcastle as TANTALLON. 1882 t/f to W. Milburn & Co., London. 1896 sold to Foscolo, Mango & Co., Pireaus r. RAYMONDOS. 1898 sold to E.J. Olivier & Cie., Rouen r. RAYMOND. 1899 sold to Watts, Watts & Co., London r. ALABAMA. 17/3/07 sailed Aru Bay, Sumatra (case oil) for Australian ports, 21/3 off Java Head explosion in

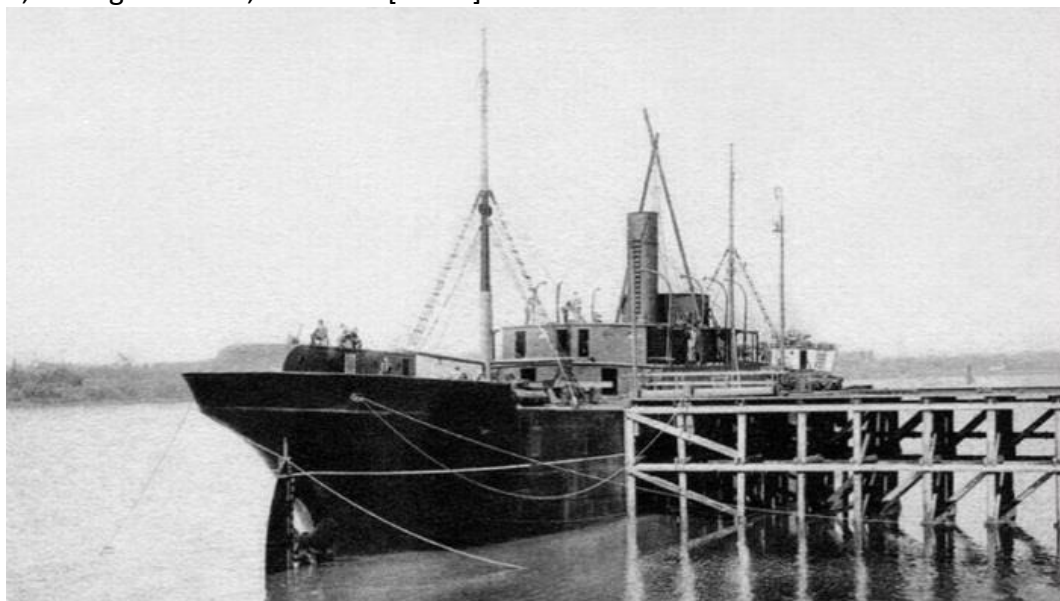


forepeak, 2 Chinese crew dead, fire extinguished. 29/7 arrived Sydney for docking and sale to James Paterson & Co., Melbourne for use as coastal collier. 8/09 t/f to James Paterson & Co. Pty Ltd. 1916 ran aground near Eden Lighthouse, refloated with little damage. 4/6/24 sold to H.C. Sleight on behalf of Japanese buyers, 4/7 sailed Newcastle for Manila. 1925 sold to NCSS r. PEI TAI. 1930s operating Tientsin-Dairen-Shanghai. Q3/1935 broken up.



PEI TAI as ALABAMA (J. Crossland).

**PEI-FU** (1926-40) 1735/02 (259.6 x 36.6', T3cy/9½k by N.E. Marine Eng. Co. Ltd, Newcastle)  
Built by Chant. Navals Anversois, Antwerp (#16) for Jepsens Rederi, Apenrade (Ger. flag) as CLARA JEBSEN. 1916 t/f to Don S.S. Co. (M. Jepsen), Manila r. DON NEIL. 6/4/17 seized at Manila and t/f to USSB as TIOGA. 1919 sold to Madrigal & Co., Manila r. MACARIA. 1926 sold to NCSS r. PEI-FU. 1930s operating Tientsin-Dairen-Shanghai. From late-1930s operated under Japanese control as HOKUFU-GO [Japanese reading of the name]. 16/7/40 o/v Syako (Korea)-Wakamatsu (iron ore) stranded on Tsunoshima, Yamaguchi Pref., total loss [Schell].



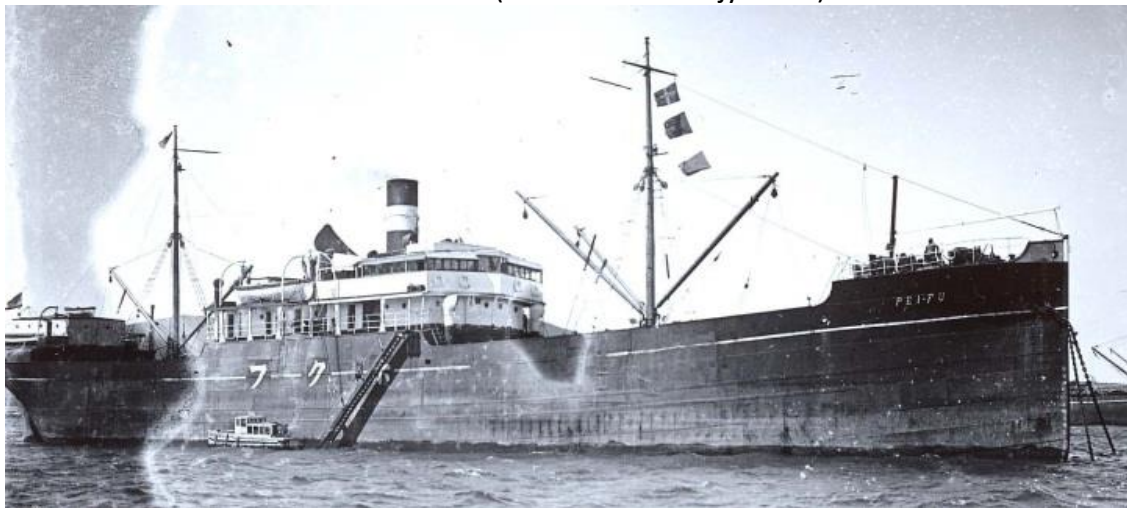
Believed to be CLARA JEBSEN, fitting out on the Schelde in Hoboken, Antwerp,  
from a postcard owned by Karsten Peterson



CLARA JEBSEN from a privately owned oil painting, image from Karsten Peterson's [www.globalmariner.com](http://www.globalmariner.com)



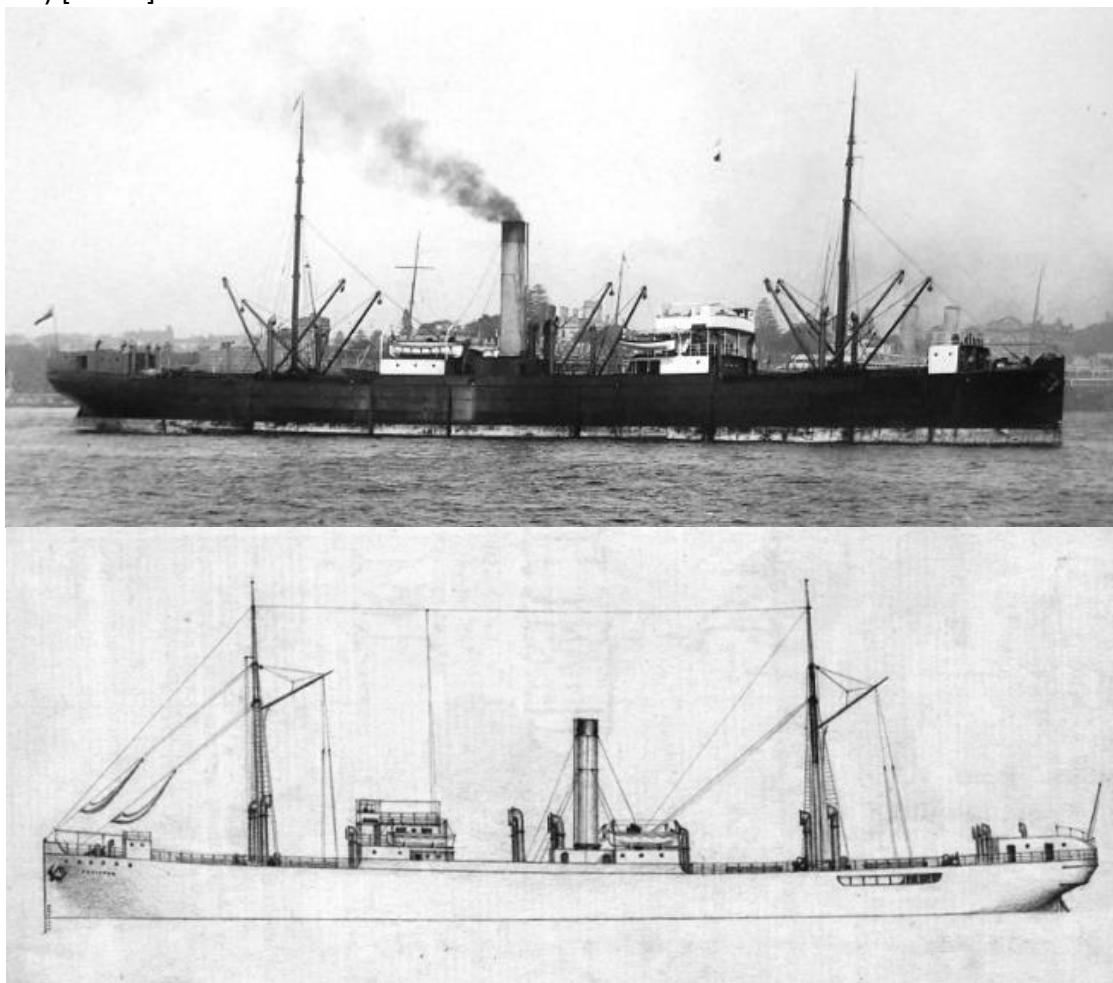
CLARA JEBSEN (Museum Sønderjyllands).



PEI-FU ex-CLARA JEBSEN at Otaru under the Chinese flag (but with name written in Japanese katakana script as HOKUFU) in the period 1937-40 (Uhachi Kinoshita/OCM).

**PEI AN** (1933-42) 2874/02 (326.0 x 45.4', T3cy/10k)

Built by Tyne Iron S.B. Co., Willington (#137) for Adelaide S.S. Co., Adelaide as TARCOOLA. 5/32 sold to Australian Tramp Steamers Ltd, Hong Kong. 7/33 register closed on sale to NCSS r. PEI AN. 31/3/36 c.0400 stranded and holed on Nightingale (Eakhlong) Is. S. of Hainan on Japanese charter (Capt. Tamisaki) after 30/3 sailing Port Remon (Indo-China) with coal, all 30 crew rescued and taken to Hoihow by Customs cruiser *Haiping*, ship looted but after lightening 7/4 refloated by salvage tug *Taikoo* and 14/4 arrived Hong Kong under own power (Malaya Tribune, 1/5/36). 14/4/37 o/v Shanghai-Whampoa on Dairen K.K. charter stranded off Whampoa, refloated (SFP, 17/4/37). 10/37 under Japanese control (HOKUAN GO). 6/39 Lloyd's survey. 24/10/42 sailed Hong Kong for Saigon in ballast and went missing, probably torp. and sunk 27/10/42 by USS *Tautog* in 10.20N-108.43E (90 km SW of Point Ke Ga) [Schell]. RLR 1955.

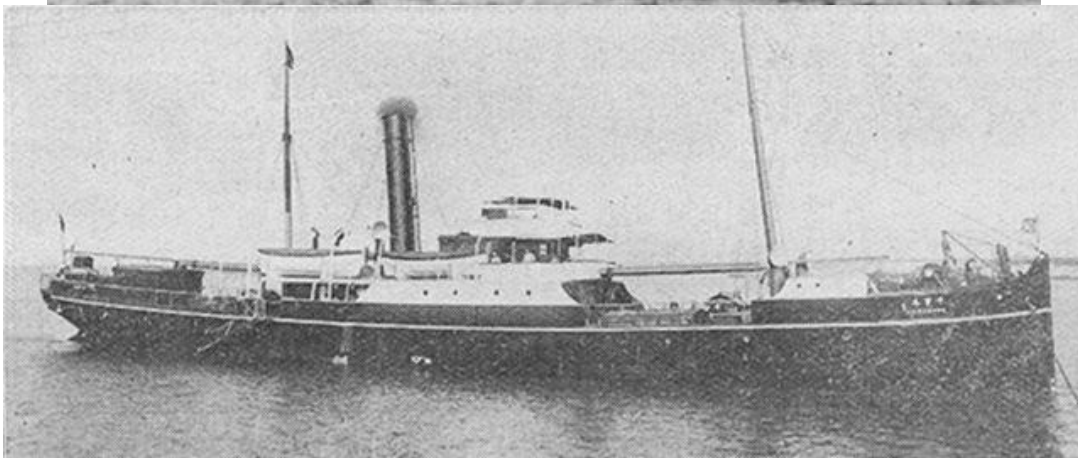
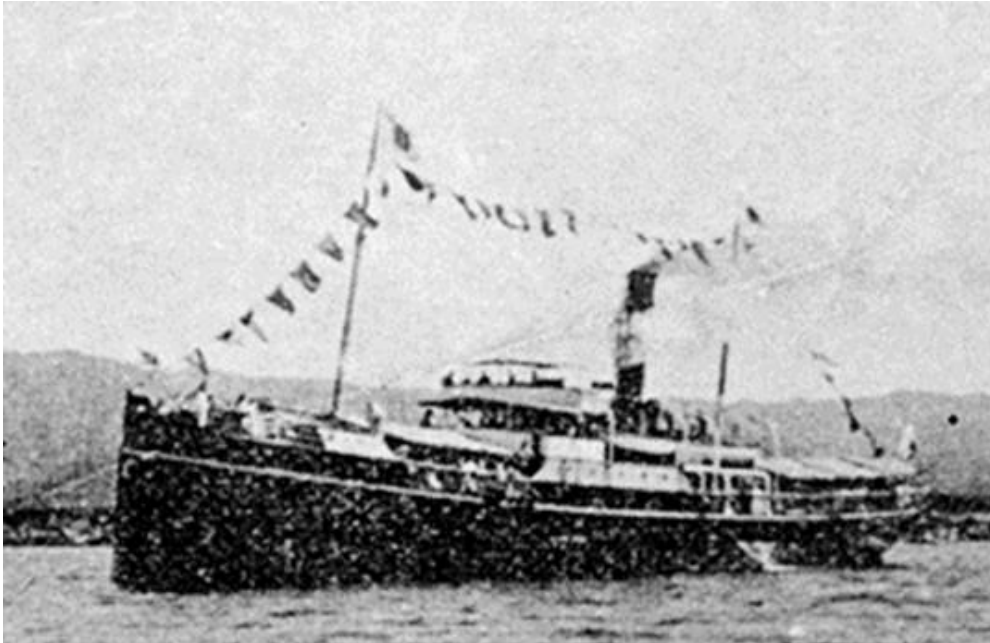


TARCOOLA (Upper: R. Dufty Lower: Line drawing by A.C. Green).

**PEI PING** (1934-39) 711/05-01 (187.0 x 26.2', T3cy)

Built by Osaka Iron Works, Osaka for Takesaburo Higashi, Osaka (#435) as CHIKA MARU 千賀丸, sometimes transcribed CHIGA MARU or SENGA MARU. 1907 sold to Hokuyo Kisen K.K., Nanao (est. 3/07). From 1909 used on a new subsidised Nanao-Fushiki-Sakhalin service but following 12/13 loss of fleet-mate GEIHO MARU (ex RINGAROOMA) sold to Toyo Bussan K.K. for 95,000 yen for use on a service to Kamchatka. 1920 sold to Chosen Yusen K.K., Jinsen r. YUKI MARU. 1934 sold to North China

S.S. Co., Tientsin r. PEI PING. 1939 sold to Yung Yuan S.S. Co., Dairen r. HO YUAN (reg.Tientsin). 6/42 owners merged into Manshu Kaiun K.K. as WAGEN GO. End August 1945 lying sunk and burned out at Dairen, probably after 8/45 Soviet attack [Schell]. RLR 1955.



CHIKA MARU (Upper: Nanao City Archives Lower: 1916 J. Steamships Register).

### **Other coasters in the vicinity with Pei names**

The Tientsin-registered **PEI-PING** 北平 326n/?? is in the China Engineering & Mining Co. list for 1889-1904.

There is the following reference to an unidentified (北泰)  
Translated extract from Dairen Kisen History p. 21:

In 1904 a Frenchman Vernon resident in Tientsin (presumably August Vernon, French citizen, Tangku, China, owner of ship GEORGE confiscated by Japan 19/8/04 outside Port Arthur) purchased the ship PEI PING (北平) of the Kaiping Mining Bureau and started a Tientsin/Newchwang service. Then the Railways Bureau chartered the **PEI TAI** (北泰) for this route with the end of the Russo Japanese War. Also that year Fujinagata Zosensho which had for a while ceased operating the Japan service placed NAGATA MARU No.1 on the Tientsin/Newchwang service. So Vernon had lost his monopoly and in 1906 the Railways Bureau acquired PEI PING and was able to offer a two ship service. The same year NAGATA MARU No.11 was withdrawn leaving the service as a Railways Bureau monopoly. In 1907 Vernon acquired 大肚子 (TA TU TSU) and with Tientsin French Consulate subsidy ran the ship on Tientsin/Newchwang route, this being a blow to the Railways Bureau, which proposed a deal to Vernon. As a result the charter of PEI TAI was terminated, two ships remained. Then the Towa hong (Yoshizo Kikuchi) of Yingkow entered the fray with chartered MANSEIGEN MARU (900 tons), eventually a 3-way service agreed with PEI PING, TA TU TSU and Towa Hong's CHOZAN (or NAGAYAMA) MARU.

The Chefoo-registered **PEI HAI** (1921-34) 783/90-9 is listed in the Little Pohai list for 1921-??).

**PEI KIANG** (1924) 160/01

Builders Hong Kong & Whampoa Dock Co. Ltd., steam engines of unspecified type by Hong Kong and Whampoa Dock Co. Ltd. Listed only in LR 1924 for Tung Ho. S.S. Co., Tientsin, former name HESPER. [The website <http://www.pbenyon.plus.com/18-1900/H/02268.html> refers to a vessel named HESPER at Weihaiwei in August 1914, and draws a link with former RN storeship HESPER 390t in commission on the China coast (and voyage to Japan) 1857-68, based in Hong Kong. It can be assumed that the 1901 HESPER revived the name of the 1850s ship.]

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