

# SEATIMES

The Newsletter of the Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada  
(Society founded in 1995 by the British Columbia Branch of The Nautical Institute)



May 2020

The *Conway* Remembered: by Geoffrey Tinker.

From: *Sea Breezes*, October 1987. <http://www.seabreezes.co.im/>



Continued from *Seatimes*, March 2020.

Apart from the interminable sweeping and the prodigious clean and polish every Saturday morning, the worst horror was coaling. I don't know how often it had to be done but as I remember it so well, it must have been at least two or three times a term. It involved shovelling coal into sacks in the bowels of the ship and attaching the sack to a hook on a wire rope hanging down from above. The steam winch on the upper deck then hoisted the sack up. The sacks were next transferred by a little trolley to the bunker near the boiler house on the fo'c'sle head, emptied and returned to the coalhole for refilling.

The coveted job, of course, was working the winch. This was claimed by "bagging" it, first come, first served. It was the cleanest job (or least dirty), quite apart from the joy of driving the steam engine with its levers and valves. When all the coal required had been brought up, we looked like coal miners and needed the attention of much hot water and soap. I think there was a rota by top for coaling, but it was also used as a punishment, providing extra hands to those already on duty. In most of life's experiences, the good things are remembered and the unpleasant episodes forgotten. This was true of life aboard *Conway*. The coaling and sweeping were insignificant compared with the pleasures of sailing on beautiful summer afternoons or evenings, just sitting idly on the upper deck during one's free time and watching interesting ships go by, or chatting with close friends, or lying on the grass at the sports field watching a cricket match.



Perhaps the happiest memories are those of one's friends, the feeling of *bonhomie*, of all being in the same boat and helping each other out in need. And we were allowed occasional "Liverpool leave", when parents or favourite aunts could take us out for a slap-up meal, after obtaining the Captain's permission.



There were also recreations on board. Alongside the gymnasium in the hold was a games room with a full size billiard table, table tennis, bagatelle boards and small tables for draughts or chess. The library in one of the stern galley rooms on the main deck was quite well supplied with novels and biography, as well as non-fiction, chiefly nautical. We even had a full set of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, though I don't know how old it was.

The *Conway* was quite a large ship. Her main deck was 205' 6" in length and her overall length from figurehead to taffrail on the stern walk was 240' 6". Her beam on the main deck was 53' 6".

Apart from the hold (below the waterline) the ship had four decks. The orlop deck, just above the waterline, was where we had our living quarters. Apart from the hatch ladders, it was quite open with a large

aperture amidships, through which we could look down into the hold.

Next up on the lower deck, the sickbay and Officers' cabins were near the stern. Amidships, the deck was an open space for various activities; this was the quarterdeck where Duty Officers and Cadets were stationed by the gangway entrance. At night, Senior Cadets slung their hammocks here, as there was insufficient room for all on the orlop deck. In

the fore part of the lower deck were the washroom and bathroom with about a dozen baths. Bath night, in rotation by tops, was once a week, with water rationed to 4" per boy, but at least it was hot.

The main deck's large open area amidships was dual-purpose. At meal times, tables were used as messes by each top, with forms to sit on at each side. The same tables served as school desks, in classrooms partitioned off by movable wooden screens, so there was much moving around of tables, forms and partitions several times a day. This area was also the ship's church on Sundays, complete with altar, lectern and harmonium. A large part of the main deck was taken up with the galley and food stores. At the after end were the officers' wardroom, ship's office and library.

To top off the ship, the upper deck was a fine open space, an all-round deck area encouraging the early morning run around and PT. High bulwarks precluded a view out but there were a number of openings, particularly on to the outboard "chains" accommodating the feet of the rigging. At the forward end of the upper deck was the boiler room and the Cadets' heads. During my time in the 1930s a science laboratory was along the port side, but still leaving space between its outer wall and the ship's side. A large poop near the stern housed the Captain's quarters, behind the charthouse.

Above the upper deck soared three masts, fore, main and mizzen. These were fully rigged except that there were only two yards, course and lower topsail, on each mast. The topgallant masts were shorter than the original masts when the ship was operational as *HMS Nile* prior to 1875 when she became *Conway*, succeeding two smaller predecessors.

Very soon after joining as New Chums we were required to climb over the futtocks. This meant climbing the rigging of the mainmast from the upper deck almost to the crosstrees top, under which the rigging sloped outwards at an angle over the vertical. The rigging had to be climbed, hanging outwards under it, to get on to the crosstrees top. There was another way of getting on to the top, through the "lubber's hole", which avoided going over the futtocks but no self-respecting Cadet would invite the taunts of his peers and elders by going through it, even at a first attempt at climbing the rigging.

The masts had another very useful purpose. By attaching a length of wire to the end of a yard, and allowing it to hang down and feed in through an orlop deck port, a wireless aerial was available. The Chief Officer's consent had to be obtained but as there were already so many ropes, wires and stays, this was not difficult. I had an old fashioned two-valve radio set in a wooden cabinet, run off a high-tension battery and a wet accumulator, ideal for use with headphones. I had one accumulator on the set and a spare under charge in the boiler-room where the ship's electricity supply was produced by a dynamo. For a small tip each term the ship's engineer and handyman was happy to keep the battery on charge.

The radio had enough power for a loudspeaker or, alternatively, it was possible to run several sets of headphones. Some of my pals obtained headphones and, after lights-out, wires were run in various directions from the set to several hammocks near me. In those days there was a dance band session on the BBC National programme every evening from about 10pm until midnight. We enjoyed bands such as Harry Roy, Carroll Gibbons, Lew Stone and others from exotic places like the Dorchester Hotel, Savoy and occasionally the BBC studio. It helped to take us away in imagination from the world of sweeping and coaling.

Our other major entertainment was the cinema show once a week in the winter terms. The screen and projector were rigged up in the hold and forms brought down from the main deck for seating. Any fault in the focussing or sound was, of course, greeted with a roar of good-natured disapproval from the audience, but the show generally went quite well, with natural breaks between changes of reel. Favourite stars were Astaire and Rogers, Jessie Matthews, Tom Walls and Ralph Lynn, Laurel & Hardy and other performers of the time.

The privilege of being a Cadet in the *Conway*, as long as he passed the entrance test, had to be paid for by our parents. The fees were similar to other independent boarding schools at about £135 per year, to which had to be added the cost of our clothing outfit including sea boots and oilskins, and school books. Pocket money of £1 10s a term was recommended and deposited with the Chaplain, who distributed it weekly according to requirements. Our chief outlet for pocket money was the ship's canteen, which sold chocolate, fruit, notepaper and the like. This was situated near the Officers' cabins on the lower deck and was open at certain times during the day, such as morning break, after lunch and during the dogwatches.



The Chart House

Sea Dreezes Archives



"Conway" (2-decker); "Indefatigable" (frigate)

Sea Dreezes Archives



There was an iniquitous system of queuing. This was by seniority and it was allowable to push in front of any Cadet who was your junior. This meant that New Chums, and even boys who had been aboard for two or three terms, were unlikely to reach the head of the queue before the canteen closed.

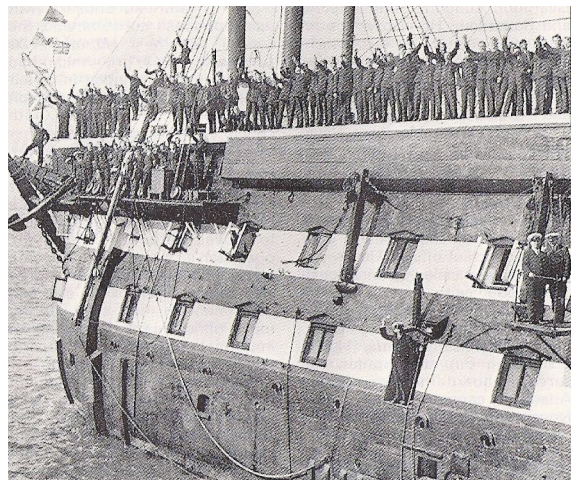
Some compensation was to be found on days when we went ashore to the playing field. There was one shop, and only one, that we were allowed to enter and it must have done very well out of us for there we could buy our needs, if we had time before having to catch the boat back to the ship from the Rock Ferry pier. Also on the way to the field was a little café, which we could visit for beans on toast at fourpence ha'penny or Welsh rarebit at sixpence.

My memory of the ship's food is that it was sparse and not very appetising. Breakfast was something like scrambled egg or kipper, lunch consisted of meat or fish with vegetables followed by jam tart or duff, and high tea was meat pie or rissole, bread and jam and skilley (tea). The portions were not large.

As a treat for Sunday lunch, there were roast potatoes to go with the beef or lamb. Initial supplies obtained by the Cadet messman of the week, appointed by each mess table, were barely sufficient and when all in the mess had been served, the messman rushed back to the galley for more roast potatoes, if any were left.

It was almost essential for food to be supplemented by parcels from home. Cakes and biscuits appeared at teatime. Syrup, jam and Marmite were spread on our bread, known in *Conway* slang as soddack (short for 'soft tack'). Cadets who felt rich at the beginning of term could slip one of the pantry stewards half-a-crown and would then be set up for the term with an extra portion of butter at teatime every day.

Education in normal school subjects provided by *Conway* was comparable with that at any other independent secondary school. Bright boys, and those prepared to work hard, got good results. The less bright, or lazy, fell behind as they would have anywhere. The additional knowledge gained, of navigation, astronomy, seamanship, engineering and signalling in Morse and Semaphore were assets lasting throughout life for boys who eventually took jobs ashore as well as those following a full career at sea.



At the end of each summer term, Prize Day was the culminating event of the school year. Parents came, speeches were made, prizes distributed, and every few years the King visited the *Conway* to present personally the Royal Gold Medal to the boy voted the outstanding Cadet of the year.

Some of the ship's Officers gave instruction but we rarely saw the Captain, Commander T.M. Goddard, or the Chief Officer, Lieut-Comdr G.W. Couch, in the classroom. Two other Officers endeared themselves to us however. "Hoppy" Lee had served his time in sail and instilled into us much invaluable lore about seamanship. Lieut. (now Commander) C.I.C. Douglas gave us

sound instruction in navigation, and much more besides. He was our mentor, guide and friend, and at that time only in his early thirties, so still not far from our own generation.

Today, at the age of 83, he has only recently relinquished a vocation he turned to and held with marked success for about 20 years in later life after leaving the *Conway*, in training the ball boys for the Wimbledon tennis tournaments.

As we progressed through our time aboard, our thoughts gradually turned to the career we would follow after leaving the *Conway*. The choice of shipping line might depend on family connections, or the places particular lines traditionally voyaged to, or the sort of training they were likely to give young fledgling Officers, and prospects of promotion.

Ships of many lines used to anchor in the Mersey near us, from the *St. Tudno* on the short pleasure run to Llandudno and the *Mona's Queen* from the Isle of Man, to ocean cargo ships of Blue Funnel, Elder Dempster or Harrison Lines, to name a few.

A few decided the sea wasn't for them and took up shore jobs, but whatever his eventual career, a *Conway* boy could hold his own against his contemporaries educated elsewhere. The normal *Conway* training took a minimum of two years although many stayed on for an extra term or two. Successful completion was rewarded with the *Conway* Certificate or the *Conway* Extra Certificate to those of above average ability.

In 1974 the modern world sadly defeated such a specialised, and special, school as the *Conway* and we were deprived of the pleasure of showing our wives and children the place where we spent our youth. The ship, and even the later *Conway* school ashore, are no more, but reminiscences about so many aspects of *Conway* life – mostly good, the unpleasant forgotten – will live on wherever Old *Conways* meet in ships, ports or members' homes around the world.

REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF "SEA BREEZES". <http://www.seabreezes.co.im/>

**The ship that ran backwards:** It was one of the worst storms to strike the British Isles in the century. It lasted almost a week, with scarcely a lull between wind shifts. The *Astronomer*, homeward bound from the US Gulf with a cargo of cotton for Manchester, was riding it out with difficulty somewhere southwest of

Ireland, and making little or no headway. It was late November 1954 and the weather was putrid, bitterly cold, with winds gusting to Force 10 or 12 most of the time. Shipping around the coast was often in dire straits.

The *Astronomer* found herself battling to stay afloat in these atrocious conditions, her radio tuned to messages about the mayhem going on around her. The Master was thankful to have a stout, well-founded ship, tight in the seams, and with plenty of power at his disposal. 24 hours earlier he had read the signs, studied the forecasts, and decided to heave to, nursing his ship with wind and sea on the starboard bow. Everything had been secured; the Chief had fired the Riley boiler, shutting off the exhaust gas-heated Cochran boiler, necessary precautions in these extreme conditions. There was nothing more to be done except ride it out.

Still, if anything should go wrong.... His mind refused to pursue the thought. The situation had become extremely uncomfortable, and as the ship plunged into the wall-sided seas her propeller was frequently exposed, racing madly. That evening the Chief Engineer climbed the stairs to the bridge to check the Telemotor and discuss the latest weather reports with the Master. The wheelhouse was quite dark, the only light being a faint glow from the binnacle reflecting from the helmsman's face above the wheel.

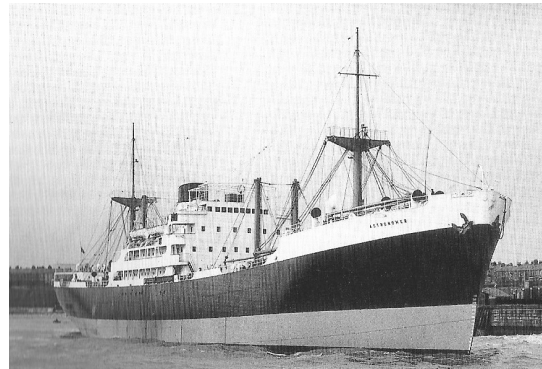
Consequently the Chief had difficulty discerning the figure of the Master who was leaning against the handrail that spanned the forepart. "Oh, it's you Chief," growled the Captain, whose eyes were better accustomed to the darkness. "It's another lousy, filthy night. You've heard the *Tresillian's*\* gone? Capsized she did, poor devils. And this bitch is steering like an old cow!"

Having thus voiced his opinion of the ship's behaviour to the unwarranted disparagement of distaff members of the animal kingdom, he lapsed into gloomy silence.

The Chief peered at the Telemotor gear and found nothing amiss. "Has to be the weather," he said. "I'll take a look aft and check the gear in the steering flat. What are the prospects anyway?" Not good, Chief, not good. The bottom's fallen out of the glass, and the Met. Office reckons we can expect gusts of 150 knots and 70-foot waves in this area. There's no sign of a break. And here we are, sou'west of the Fastnet, and supposed to be taking the pilot at Lynas three hours ago!" As if to underline his disgust, the ship plunged heavily and shipped a large green sea over the weather rail. Damn it! Keep her steady, quartermaster!" "Aye-aye sir." The sailor wrestled with the wheel. "But she's not answering sir...."

Making his way aft, the Chief entered the engine room where the Second Engineer was on watch. All seemed as normal as could be expected in those conditions. The violent motion of the ship, and the bone – shaking rattle of the main engine each time the prop lifted out of the water, quickly muffled, as the governor cut in, was disconcerting, but not unusual. Nevertheless the Chief could sense that all was not as it should be. The valves were lifting uniformly; the Second was calmly entering up his log; the donkeyman was casually dripping oil amid various moving parts. Yet all was not well. The tachometer needle wavered drunkenly between 30 and 80 rpm; the... then the aberration struck him, like the deliberate mistake in a puzzle picture. *The shaft was revolving the wrong way!* Instead of going ahead, the main engine was going astern. Heaven only knew what the consequences would be in those conditions – no wonder the ship was not steering. The Chief bore down on his astonished subordinate. "The engine's going astern!" he shrieked above the din.

The Second's eyes swept the gauges and indicators. All was as it should be. "It can't be", he cried, incredulously. "Look at the shaft, man," yelled the Chief, struggling with the controls. The younger man's stomach contracted painfully as he realised the shaft was indeed rotating the wrong way. Quickly they stopped the engine and restarted it in the 'ahead' mode. Almost at once the ship's crazy motion became easier. Somewhat calmer and greatly relieved, the two engineers discussed the phenomenon. They came to the conclusion, albeit something they had never experienced before, that the propeller, in one of its airborne phases, had slapped down with such force into a rising sea that it had been knocked into reverse, overcoming the torque of the shaft and transferring the shock momentarily to the engine itself, which then continued to turn the shaft in the wrong direction. Incredible – but apparently true!





The Chief wended his way up to the bridge to report. There he found the Master in a more cheerful frame of mind, but still down on the farm with his figures of speech. "Steering like a lamb now, Chief", he chuckled, "steering like a lamb! Wonder what got into the old bitch?" The Chief at once proceeded to enlighten him, somewhat shaken, but not without a certain relish, as if he had just defused a bomb in the engine room.

\* **November 30<sup>th</sup> 1954:** The *Tresillian* foundered in [St George's Channel](#), 44 nautical miles (81 km) off [Cork](#), Ireland with the loss of 24 of her 40 crew. Sixteen survivors rescued and landed at [Cobh](#).

**How Radar for Merchant Ships Developed: The year was 1942.** Radar technology was developed during the Second World War, but it all took off following a decision that from 1942 all U.S. and British commercial vessels had to be equipped with radar to improve the safety of navigation as well as to enhance the detection of enemy ships.

It took quite some time until radar became commonplace on merchant ships of other flag. Radar was expensive and somewhat complicated for navigating officers to use. The presentation was in "relative motion," relative in the way that the targets appeared on the screen, the PPI, to the own vessel, and this was sometimes difficult for the navigators to come to terms with. The officers on watch had to plot other ships with a pen on the PPI or on an accessory, a plotting screen.

To do this, a certain skill was needed because when two ships approached each other the navigators on each ship really had to know what they were doing. The term "radar assisted collision" was coined.

A relative motion radar display was a rather simple device. The coils that provided the sweep and the radar signals were rotating, synchronized with the antenna communicating over slip rings. A micro switch signalled the heading (the course).

The sweep picked up and indicated targets that could be a foreign ship, a lighthouse, a buoy, a mark or just sea clutter. The radars were equipped with electronic tubes, and their logic capacity was limited.

The next step in the development of merchant marine radars was the introduction of "True Motion." In True Motion other ships occur as targets not sailing relative the own ship but instead sailing like the own ship "on a sea chart." To accomplish this, some computer intelligence was needed.

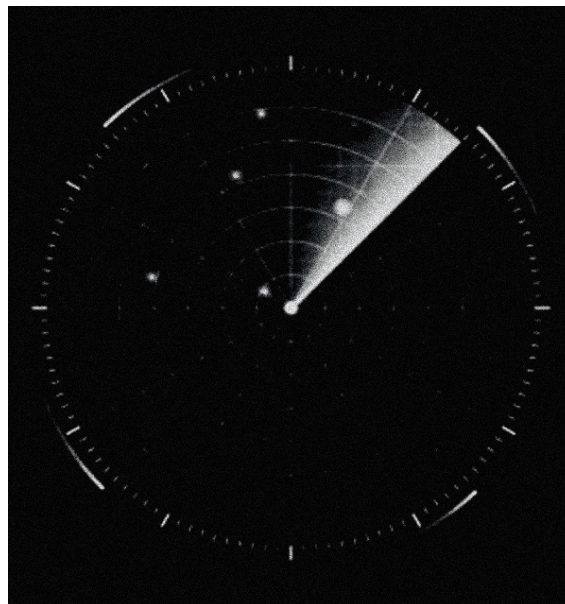
In 1968, Salenrederierna of Sweden purchased its first set of True Motion Radars from Raytheon for installation in the tanker *Sea Sovereign*, the ship that had the first process computer onboard. These radars were equipped with an interesting analog computer that had several servomotors and receivers. This offered a very interesting experience, but its reliability was not very impressive.

Once navigators had been trained and got used to the capabilities of "True Motion" it turned out to be a big success. With fixed coils and some computer intelligence the True Motion Radars became the platform for development of the first "Anti Collision Radars." With fixed coils, vectors could be attached to the targets indicating their course and speed in true motion. This way, the navigator got much better input for decision-making.

Salenrederierna AB as always on the edge of technology acquired the first unit available, also this time from Raytheon and for delivery in 1972.



project was named "Ship Handling," and it covered the layout of the navigation bridge recognizing radar as an essential navigation instrument.



Automatic plotting had been specified, like rate of turn of targets, but as the antenna rotation was still the standard 25 rotations per minute each target was seen by the radar only every two seconds. Also the antenna beam angle was the same as in other Raytheon 10cm radars, so the targets appeared rather big. Before digital computer intelligence was available, it was hard to achieve early and accurate detection of foreign targets' course changes.

In the mid-1970s, a project began to examine alternative more advanced screens like those that existed for Air Traffic Control. We at Salenrederierna started a new project, this time also with the Swedish Ship Research Institute. The

We involved a company specialized in Air Traffic Control, and based on their displays, digital computer technology and experience, we designed the navigation system we wanted to see on our ships. We arranged a ground stabilized picture with light houses, buoys, marks and land-based restrictions, and we incorporated a video of the radar picture recorded on a ship sailing through the selected area. We also added fairway restriction lines to appear on the display.

When we were happy with the result, we invited the maritime industry for a demonstration. The reactions were positive, but comments were that "technology is not available at the price you are ready to pay," without thinking that the digital technology at that time was developing at the speed of light.

Soon we got GPS, Electronic Sea charts, ECDIS and finally ECDIS integrated with the radar picture. The layout of the present-day navigation bridge is more advanced than we ever dreamed of in our project 40 years ago.

*Leif Johansson was Sr. Project Engineer at Salenrederierna AB 1968-1980.*

The opinions expressed herein are the author's and not necessarily those of The Maritime Executive.

February 23, 2020. BY [LEIF JOHANSSON](#)

<https://maritime-executive.com/blog/how-radar-for-merchant-ships-developed>

**The Maritime Executive**  
INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL FOR LEADERS

---

### Perhaps it is time that one of us altered course!



Costamare's 2014 built, 300 metre long 9400 TEU [MSC AJACCIO](#)  
 transiting the Singapore Strait westbound, heading for Colombo.  
 DAILY COLLECTION OF MARITIME PRESS CLIPPINGS 2020 – 014  
[www.maasmondmaritime.com](http://www.maasmondmaritime.com)

---

**Should you call the Master?** Many of you will be familiar with the TV programme "Who wants to be a millionaire" (or its derivatives). When the going gets too tough, the contestants have the option to "phone a friend" to help them with perhaps finding the right answer. Think of calling the Master in the same vein and you won't go too far wrong. At the recent Command Seminar in Glasgow, the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) told us of a number of investigations into incidents in the English Channel where the outcomes may have been very different if the OOW called the Master at an early stage. This resulted in some interesting discussions around this point where a number of Cadet/Junior Officer delegates recalled experiences on their own vessels where they (or one of their colleagues) had been in doubt as to whether they should call the Master. I am sure that it also raised a few eyebrows amongst the more senior delegates ... what on earth was going on?

Every Master that I sailed with, as far as I recall, will have written into his Standing Orders “*if in doubt call me*”. I know that I have done the same over a number of years in command and, in fact, repeat the expression in my night orders every night. So why do I do that?

Although I have delegated the overall safe conduct of the vessel to the OOW, the responsibility for the vessel remains with me and, in the unlikely event of a collision or grounding, I will not thank any of my officers for not calling me in plenty of time. As Master I do not consider that I must be on the bridge at all times and I sincerely hope that I do not give the impression that I do not trust my watchkeepers. I also sincerely hope that I am approachable and not a man to be feared.

I, too, have been through doubts as to whether or not to call the Master, but now that the buck stops with me. I do not want to find myself on the end of an inquiry where, had I known in good time what was developing on the bridge and outside, I could have given advice and assistance to the OOW. I may have taken over and intervened to provide a different result.

To all OOWs, if the question “Should I call the Master?” has ever crossed your mind, the unequivocal answer is “YES!” You have obviously considered that there are elements of doubt in your own mind: has your appraisal of the situation been adequate; do you have confidence in your decision making; are you looking for support and, possibly, guidance? These elements of doubt may be due to a general lack of confidence in your ability in the situation in which you find yourself, possibly through lack of experience, or you may find yourself overwhelmed by a collection of factors that you may have dealt with individually in the past but are now present all at once.

It may be tempting to call one of your fellow watchkeepers before you call the Master, particularly if you think that the Master is unapproachable or authoritarian. After all, they too are watchkeepers and they may readily understand your doubts and they may be more inclined to give you advice and guidance in a non-judgemental manner.

Even at 0300 hrs, on a cold, dark rough night, I would far rather be called to give you the support and guidance you want than to find out in the morning from the conversations on the bridge that there had been a problem and that I did not know about it. I may not be in the best of moods at that time of night but I can assure you that you would prefer to see me grumpy, tired and dishevelled than to see me after the event, which you could have avoided had you called me!

If in doubt, ASK the question.

**Captain Trevor Bailey FNI. Captain’s Column. Seaways. January 2015.**

(Captain Bailey is Master of the *Hebridean Princess*).

This article also appeared in the February 2015 edition of the CMMC “From the Bridge”.

<https://www.mastermariners.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/FTB-15-02b.pdf>



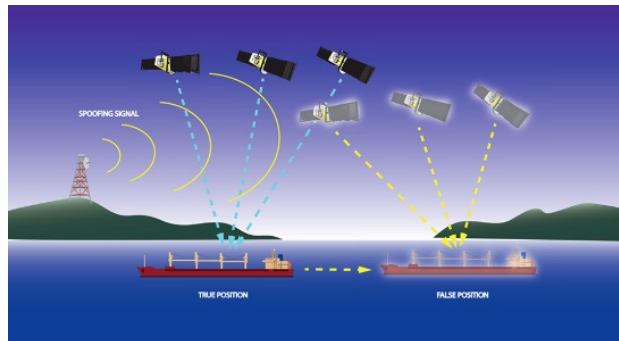
## Mass Global Positioning System (GPS) Spoofing At Ports In The People's Republic Of China

There has been an increase of GPS spoofing incidents in and around coastal areas and ports in the People's Republic of China (PRC) during the past year. In July 2019, an American containership transiting the Huangpu River near the port of Shanghai experienced nearby ships appearing and disappearing from its ECDIS display. The vessel proceeded into port and later lost signals on both GPS units just before berthing. A formal report was thereafter filed with the US Coast Guard (USCG) following this incident.

Following these reports, the Center for Advanced Defense Studies (C4ADS), a non-profit organization that analyzes global conflict and security issues, examined automatic identification system (AIS) data in the area. It was discovered that hundreds of ships had been spoofed and the activity had been ongoing for months affecting ships across Shanghai simultaneously and mostly vessels navigating the Huangpu River.

Days' and weeks' worth of data revealed the spoofed ships' GPS signals congregated into large circles, later dubbed “crop circles”. This tactic is unlike traditional spoofing which moves signals to the same position creating a confusing traffic situation for ships' pilots. Spoofing is more easily detected in coastal areas because of the wide availability of terrestrial and satellite based AIS data.

A string of spoofing attacks in the Black Sea was previously reported in 2017. It is likely that the kinds of mass disruptions as seen in the Black Sea and PRC maritime regions are occurring elsewhere as they have been difficult to detect. An article in the November 2019 edition of MIT Technology Review, ‘Ghost ships, crop circles, and soft gold: A GPS mystery in Shanghai, provides a summary of the kind of possible technologies likely being used and possible reasons for observing this activity in the Shanghai region’.





GPS jamming and spoofing have the ability to create confusion in a ship's wheelhouse particularly when transiting a busy port. Vessels are advised to take precautions if experiencing jamming (blocking of the satellite signal so that a receiver can no longer operate), or spoofing (making a GPS receiver display a false position).

If a GPS malfunction occurs, vessel Masters are reminded to take the following measures: -

- plot the vessel's last known position;
- switch to the primary/secondary navigation device;
- make a log entry detailing the time and location of the failure;
- use all available means of navigation to navigate safely; and
- report all failures immediately to the appropriate authorities.

Source: The American Club. 31. 12. 2019

<https://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/mass-global-positioning-system-gps-spoofing-at-ports-in-the-peoples-republic-of-china/>

**The origin of seafaring words:** Now let us look at some of the things below decks that have to do with creature comforts. Can you imagine wedging yourself into a wobbly hammock for the night? The hammock is said to have been introduced on to ships by Columbus, who saw that natives in the Caribbean slung them between trees.

So the word comes from the Caribbean 'hamorca' via Spanish. Dutch and German speakers tried to make it sound sensible in their languages and came up with the equivalent of 'hanging mat' (hangmat or hangematte), which is quite clever.

Hammocks were hung only 14 inches apart. When ladies used to join sailors on board, the officer rousing the men in the morning would shout, "show a leg". If the leg was hairy the owner had to get up and work. The call remained in use even after 1840, at which time all women were banned.

The next thing is to inspect the mess. The word itself actually means a dish or a course of a meal, as in the biblical story of Esau who sold his inheritance to his brother Jacob for a mess of potage. Then it came to mean a set of four people who were served together at a feast. Shakespeare used it just to mean a set of four things. Now it isn't so much the people but the place.

All this may not sound very posh. 'Posh' of course is supposed to come from the initial letters of 'Port Out Starboard Home', meaning that the cabins on the shady side of the ship on its journey to and from the east would be cooler and hence more expensive. Now experts have ruined our innocent pleasure in this notion by saying there is no evidence for it, but have not put forward any better theory. **"Watery Words."** Fairplay Magazine. March 7<sup>th</sup> 1991.

**Marine training at Camosun College gets helping hand:** A financial shot in the arm for Camosun College in Victoria, B.C. from an eastern Canadian shipyard will translate into a more robust marine sector on the West Coast and new programs at the school. Halifax-based Irving Shipbuilding's subsidiary, Atlantic Towing, has committed \$700,000 over three years to help Camosun build a new marine training simulator that will result in Camosun adding two new marine programs to its curriculum, increasing the number of marine professionals entering the industry in this region.



Tim Brownlow, Director of Industry Relations for Atlantic Towing, left, Gilles Gagnon, Atlantic Towing's General Manager, and Sherri Bell, President of Camosun College, at the Camosun Coastal Centre on Thursday

Gilles Gagnon, Atlantic's general manager, said the company's intention has been to expand its footprint and, after landing a contract with the Canadian Coast Guard to build two ships, the next step was to develop talent.

In 2018, Canadian Coast Guard awarded a contract to Atlantic for two emergency offshore towing vessels to operate in B.C. waters. "What follows naturally is local employment," he said. "It's exciting for us that people from the Island will be able to train on the Island and, at some point, be able to work on vessels such as ours."

By supporting the simulator, Gagnon said they expect to grow the number of marine professionals entering the industry by making marine education in Western Canada more affordable and accessible.

The simulator, which is under construction at Camosun's Interurban campus, could be completed by the end of the year. The intention, said Camosun Vice-President of partnerships Geoff Wilmshurst, is to eventually move it to the Camosun Coastal Centre when the 4,000 square foot marine industry training facility is expanded.

The simulator will allow students to take on a variety of tasks, including ship handling, bridge team management, tug and barge handling operations, anchor handling, ice navigation, search and rescue operations and pilot training.

Camosun President Sherri Bell said without such a partnership the simulator and the new courses would not have been possible, adding this type of connection between industry and education is critical. "Our programs are focused on giving



students the skills they need for a range of in-demand careers,” Bell said. “The generous support from Atlantic Towing and Irving Shipbuilding for a new marine simulator will allow more students to train closer to home.” Michelle Troare, acting director of the Camosun Coastal Centre, said the centre has also been working with First Nations to create a pathway for Indigenous students to enter the marine workforce.

“By building a simulator, it also allows students who come through the centre to go into nautical training as well, which we haven’t been able to offer in the past,” Troare said. “This opens a lot of opportunity.”

Atlantic has already forged relationships with the Songhees First Nation, which include a joint venture involving Songhees Events and Catering and ESS-Compass Group Canada, and a contract with Salish Sea Industrial Services. Songhees chief executive Christina Clarke said the marine simulator will be a game-changer for their students.

Forming Salish Sea Industrial Services with Ralmax and Esquimalt Nation is one of our strategies for returning to the marine economy. “Songhees Nation’s economy was intimately connected to the Salish Sea for millennia,” Clarke said. “Forming Salish Sea Industrial Services with Ralmax and Esquimalt Nation is one of our strategies for returning to the marine economy.”

Andrew Duffy. Times Colonist. March 13<sup>th</sup> 2020

<https://www.timescolonist.com/business/marine-training-at-camosun-college-gets-helping-hand-1.24096972>

**The Story that wasn’t told:** According to records held at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, the Halifax based Canadian cable-layer *Mackay-Bennett* was chartered to act as a mortuary ship after the *Titanic* sank and when it was realised that many bodies would remain afloat because of their lifejackets.

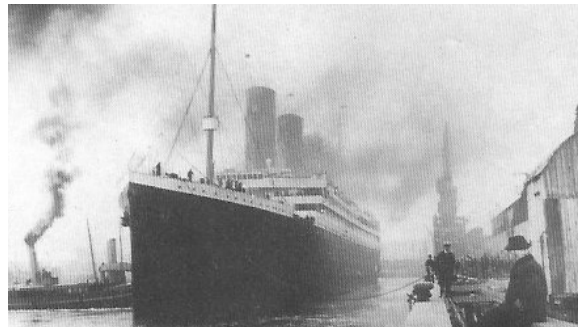
Under the command of Captain F.H. Lardner, the vessel sailed from Halifax two days after the *Titanic*’s loss. On board were a Minister, an undertaker, gallons of embalming fluid, 150 coffins and 20 tons of ice.

Fog and rough weather delayed the cable-layer’s arrival at the scene of the sinking until April 20<sup>th</sup>, five days after the liner sank. The ship’s crew took to boats and recovered many bodies plus bits of debris, which would become souvenirs.

Captain Lardner’s diary for April 21<sup>st</sup> reads, “Undertaker embalmed 20 bodies, 6 being left for morning. 8.15pm burial service was held on fo’c’sle and 24 bodies were buried, these being mostly crew and not identified.

After several days they were relieved by another cable-layer, the *Minia*. The *Mackay-Bennett* returned to port, flag at half-mast, carrying 190 bodies. A further 116 had been buried at sea because of their deteriorated conditions.

In keeping with the strict barriers of the day, only First Class passengers were landed in coffins. Second Class and Steerage victims were sewn up in canvas bags while the bodies of crew members were stacked on the after deck and carried ashore on stretchers.



The *Titanic* is seen departing on her ill-fated voyage from Southampton on 10th April 1912.



**This story appeared in the July 1998 Marine Digest, a now discontinued magazine produced in Seattle.**

Also see: <https://atlantic-cable.com/Cables/ships/MacBen/index.htm>

and <https://www.encyclopedia-titanica.org/titanic-ships/mackay-bennett.html>

For more on the Cable-ships see: <https://maritimemuseum.novascotia.ca/what-see-do/titanics-halifax-connection/cable-ships>



**“Marine Delivers”:** Read this magazine published by  
The Chamber of Marine Commerce

<https://www.marinedelivers.com/magazine/>

**Super-Size Me:** Super-size doesn't just refer to Hamburgers and Fries. Since the arrival of the container ship *Emma Maersk* in 2006, the definition of big in the maritime world changed and continues to change as Ultra Large Container Vessels (ULCV) just keep getting bigger. What defines a ULCV? Consensus is any container ship over 10,000 TEU's. According to DynaLiners, by 2020 there will be nearly 600 ULCV's operating worldwide, the biggest will be 24,000TEU (roughly 400M X 66M) and there are plans for still bigger down the road. In fact, the 24K TEU ships have arrived with pilot groups around the world preparing for them and a few already handling them.

**Big and Small:** 2006 is not that long ago. In the space of little more than a decade, marine transportation witnessed container ships go from about 294metres (965') to today's 400metres (1312') behemoths. That may not sound like much but considering that added length, width and height have a dramatic effect on overall weight, it is much. The average 294metre container ship is about 55,000 Deadweight Tons; a 400metre container ship is about 191,000 Deadweight Tons. While today's giants may only be about 25% longer than their predecessors, they are nearly 400% heavier and therein lies the challenge. They're not twice as heavy or even three times, they are four times as heavy. Weight matters when talking about something the size of the Empire State building, even if it floats.

**Measuring Up:** The idea of economy of scale (Ultra Large Vessels) and its implementation has been driven by major international shipping conglomerates, not the IMO, or individual member states or ports or any national or international safety agency. The increase in container ship size has flat outpaced the international ports' ability to adjust and accommodate. According to World Port Source there are roughly 3,000 ports around the world. Of those ports that can handle ULCV's, the vast majority have been left playing catch up regarding a host of issues surrounding ULCV's, the biggest issue being infrastructure.

**Five Pounds in a One-Pound Bag:** The development and launching of ULCV's seemingly happened overnight. Professionals tasked with manning and piloting these ships did not have abundant time to prepare for the myriad issues complicating their safe movement. Major adjustments in mind-set and training had to occur in a relatively short time frame. Most importantly, as mentioned already, port size was not going to keep pace with ship size. Professionals were going to have to move bigger and bigger ships in ports that were designed for significantly smaller vessels.

**Car vs. Coach:** Surprising, since the introduction of ULCV's in 2006, there have been relatively few incidents or accidents. I would guess less than two-dozen, worldwide, nothing to shake a stick at. Those include incidents at sea like fire, collisions, breaking up, etc. and incidents in ports like groundings. The few incidents and accidents must be held against the backdrop of how quickly ULCV's came into use, how ill prepared most ports were and the large number of this class now plying the oceans. It is not a normal, routine or simple task to safely move this class of ship, day in and day out. For those readers who are not mariners, think of it this way. One day you get notified that by the end of the year your family car will be taken away, in return you will be assigned a 13metre (40') Diesel Coach to use and drive every day. You will be expected to drive it without incident or accident, not most of the time but all of the time. How would you feel? You are a licensed driver so what's to worry about? Obviously there would be much to be concerned about including lack of experience driving them, road size, parking access, operating in heavy traffic, etc. The introduction of maritime giants caused similar pause from the mariners manning them, with many questions regarding long-term safe operation.

**People Make the World Go Round:** So why so relatively few incidents and accidents? Because the professional mariners operating ULCV's have entirely stepped up and delivered on overall ULCV operational safety. The officers and crews manning them and the pilots handling them have done an exceptional job incorporating this class seamlessly into the greater marine transportation system. The mariners themselves have made a pivotal difference. We have gone about the business of moving ULCV's with little fanfare. So little that we may have done ourselves a disservice. I'm not suggesting commendations for doing one's job, but there should be recognition for the professionalism and speed with which this class was handled and the continued job well done under, at times, very difficult circumstances and conditions.

Perhaps because there has been so much focus on automation in the maritime realm that mariners have gotten lost in the shuffle and don't get enough credit or attention for the critical role we still play? Automation will have its day one day, until then, kudos to those seafaring professionals manning and operating colossally big ships while safeguarding those lands and waterways they serve.



**How Big is Too Big?** Finally, professionals operating this class of ships will continue to ask ourselves, how big is too big? It would be irresponsible to stop asking. Few mariners want to discourage commerce but we want that commerce

to be safe; it's in our own interest. The international marine transportation business does not operate in a vacuum; there should be discussions at the highest levels (i.e. IMO) regarding reasonable safe limits on container ship size. This is not a new problem, we have seen this before during the rush to build ever-bigger tankers in the late 1960's and it didn't end well.

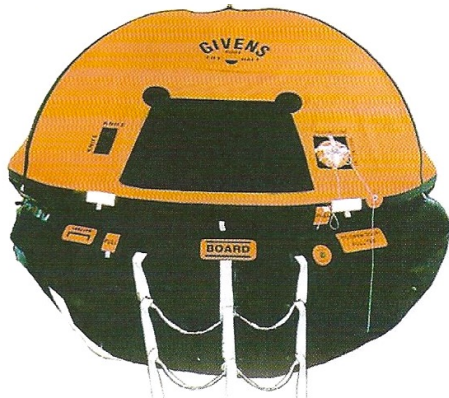
**Super-Sized Problem:** Because we are the end users (actual operators) in the international marine transportation system, mariners are focused on maritime transportation solutions. We are frequently the first to see and recognize potential problems. If not managed with more care, oversight and safety, many of us believe Super-Sized ships may one day become a Super-Sized problem.

**Captain George Livingstone.** June 4, 2019. <https://gcaptain.com/captain-george-livingstone-super-size-me/>

*Capt. George Livingstone is a San Francisco Bar Pilot.*

**Photo: The inbound MAERSK McKINNEY MOLLER passing the outbound MSC GULSUN in the Maasmond. Frank Behling ©**

**Maritime Safety Benefits from NASA Technologies:** A recent exhibition in the U.S.A. entitled "Spin Off Day" featured seven companies that have partnered with NASA to bring innovations to the market. The 1958 "Space Act" that created NASA mandated that the Agency transfer as much of its technology as possible for the benefit of the public.



To date NASA has documented more than 1,660 of these technologies called "spin offs" in its annual publication first launched in 1996.

NASA Chief Technologist Bobby Braun said at the event, "We invest in technologies for what they bring to NASA in terms of future missions of science and exploration, but we can never forget that we also invest in these things because of what they do right here on earth".

The products on show at this year's "Spin Off Day" all trace their origins back to space including an igloo shaped life raft. Engineers at Johnson Space Centre originally designed the self-righting raft design to prevent life rafts holding astronauts from capsizing from the downdraft of helicopters after Apollo-era splashdown landings. They did this by designing and patenting a hydraulically stabilised ballast system that would prevent a life raft from capsizing in extreme weather conditions or from the downdraft of a

helicopter. Now manufactured by Givens Marine Survival Co. Inc. of Rhode Island, the raft is credited with saving many sailors' lives.

<https://spinoff.nasa.gov/>

### Flags of convenience and the coronavirus cruise ship debacle | The Strategist

Covid-19 has shone a spotlight on accountabilities and practices in the international cruise ship industry. Until now, the developed world has been in love with the industry, which has been growing at 15% per year, offering a range of experiences from small luxury vessels cruising the Antarctic to floating parties in tropical climes. But the pandemic has shown that cruise shipping is essentially an unregulated industry that has thrived in an environment lacking rules. Will Covid-19 change that?



More than **100 cruise ships** with thousands of crew on board are currently sitting off the coast of the United States. Most ships of this size are potential hotspots for Covid-19—they house large numbers of people in close confines, with little ability for social isolation. The US Navy is grappling with the **same problem** with the aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* in Guam, but, unlike the military, the cruise ship industry isn't an instrument of state, and companies have been resisting government pleas for them to leave and return to their home ports.

One of the reasons nations struggle with managing ships in their waters is the practice of using 'flags of convenience'. Under longstanding maritime law, all ships must be registered to a nation-state. Flying a flag of convenience is a practice

that enables a ship to be owned and operated by a company in one nation but registered in another. Often, these ships are registered in a country that doesn't have the means to support them in remote corners of the world and that offers cheap registration with minimal regulation of safety and employment conditions.

The practice of using flags of convenience began during the Prohibition era when the US banned the transport of alcohol for human consumption and shipping companies looked for alternative business options. That period extended from 1920 until 1933 and led to many shipping companies registering their vessels in Panama in an attempt to bypass the legislation.



Flags of convenience became more widely used following World War II with the expansion of the maritime trade. By offering registration as a commodity, several small nations saw opportunity in providing low registration fees, relaxed regulation, an easy registration process, and reduced standards surrounding inspection, employment and other conditions. These nations include well-groomed tax havens like Bermuda and states like Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Marshall Islands. Many of these countries have little to no ability to control the behaviour of the ships' owners or captains. In cargo ships and oil tankers, the practice facilitated the hiring of crew from international labour pools without the need to adhere to labour laws in home countries, such as paying the minimum wage, or to respond to seamen's unions. Of the 100,000 British sailors registered in the 1960s, only around **27,000 remained employed** by the mid-1990s. At that time, there were around 1.3 million seafarers drawn from places with cheaper labour costs such as the Philippines, Indonesia, South Asia, Russia and Ukraine.

In addition, merchant shipping has required fewer and fewer crew over time—a 100,000-ton bulk carrier today may have only 15 crewmembers on board. Self-isolating 15 individuals on a ship up to 450 metres long isn't a problem compared with trying to quarantine the huge numbers of people travelling and working on cruise ships.

It was the ever-expanding cruise ship industry that garnered the most advantage from flags of convenience, primarily to minimise labour costs. A ship carrying 4,000 or 5,000 passengers needs hundreds of crew to feed, service and pamper what amounts to the population of a small city.

The cruise industry operates on fine margins. On average, the revenue per passenger on a **typical cruise** is US\$1,791 and expenses are around US\$1,564, a margin of 12%. Without passengers, few of the expenses can be offset, so there's no motivation to sail the ship halfway around the world to a homeport without passengers.

As we've seen during the Covid-19 crisis, if a port won't allow the crew ashore, and the owners won't pay for them to return home, the ship and crew are stranded at sea like some 21<sup>st</sup> century *Flying Dutchman*. Many of the crew are under contracts that provide for travel home only two or three times a year. They are now in lockdown on board these ships, with no obvious way home. What effect will that have on their mental and physical health?

The pandemic has raised serious questions about the practice of using flags of convenience. Should we continue to allow the cruise industry to operate in the shadows without rigorous regulation and oversight? Or is it time to end the practice and return to requiring ships to be registered in the nation-state of the company that owns them?

17 Apr 2020|David Millar **Australian Strategic Policy Institute.**

David Millar works in ASPI's professional development program. Image: Cameron Spencer/Getty Images.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/flags-of-convenience-and-the-coronavirus-cruise-ship-debacle/>



### **This year the Society is offering Bursaries on two occasions.**

The deadline to apply for the first was April 30<sup>th</sup>. Those applications have now been assessed and the winners selected. Three applicants, all from the BCIT Nautical Science program, were successful.

**Congratulations to Cadets Alexander Gould, Lauren McAughren and Nicole Pickering.**

**Do you wish to make a financial contribution to the Society? Is it time for you to renew your membership? The Annual Membership Fee remains at \$40.00 but any amount that you can donate will be greatly appreciated.**

**Please make your cheque payable to the NPESC and mail it to: -**

**Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada,  
3648 Glenview Crescent, North Vancouver, B.C. V7R 3E8**

**Thank you.**

**Contributions to the NPESC are tax deductible. Charitable Registration # 1039049-20**



**Articles or comments for inclusion in future editions  
of Seatimes can be sent to me at [whitknit@telus.net](mailto:whitknit@telus.net)  
David Whitaker FNI**

