

Comet in September

We understand that the Atlantic Container Line, whose ships are to use Southampton's new container berth commencing in the Autumn, hope to start taking delivery of the first of their six container ships in September, when the *Atlantic Comet* is due to appear. The ACL is a consortium of six major shipping companies—Cunard Line, French Line, Holland-America Line, Swedish American Line, Swedish Transatlantic Line and Wallenius Line.

To other flags

Although there has recently been a welcome increase in the number of shipbuilding orders placed on behalf of British shipowners—Ellerman Lines, Palm Lines, Prince Line and Ropner Shipping, among others, have placed new tonnage—there is still a steady drain of vessels away from British Register, with Greek interests predominant among the buyers. One such ship worth mentioning is the Royal Mail line *Essequibo* (7,785 g.t.) built by Harland & Wolff's Glasgow shipyard in 1952. The *Essequibo* has been bought by the China Navigation Co., and renamed *Ningpo*, and will of course serve in Far Eastern waters. The sister ship *Ebro* still continues to serve Royal Mail.

The Greeks have recently bought Ropner Shipping Co.'s bulk carrier *Barby* (16,575 g.t.) completed in Sunderland in 1962; also an Ellerman liner the *Anatolian* (3,700 g.t.). In addition 'Mediterranean buyers' have recently purchased a Cunard-Brocklebank liner, the *Mahronda* (8,537 g.t.) for something in the region of £110,000. This vessel was built for Brocklebank Line in 1947. In the building of the vessel there was the total disappearance of cowl ventilation for the cargo holds and the fitting of mechanical ventilation throughout.

Castle memories

One of our friends in dockland has found a photograph of *Carisbrook Castle* among old papers, taken when she was a hospital ship in the first world war. *Carisbrook Castle*, 7,900 tons, was built in 1898 and was then the pride of the Castle Line. This was at the time when the rivalry between the Union S.S. Co. and Castle Line was really hotting up and her standard accommodation set a new high in the Castle fleet. For the first time her first class passengers were amidships, and were provided with adequate promenading space, second class passengers were aft and third class were forward. After the amalgamation of the two companies, when the mail service started from Southampton, *Carisbrook Castle* was the last mail vessel to sail from London in 1900.

By 1914, however, she was in reserve in Southampton Water at Netley and was immediately requisitioned by the Admiralty as a hospital ship. After the war, she and another veteran, the *Norman* were recommissioned and re-entered the mail service, which in October 1919 adopted the new Friday schedule.

In 1910 the intermediate service to East Africa was started by the *Guelph* and two years later, when she was transferred to the Royal Mail Line, the *Carisbrook Castle* ended her days on the Royal East African Service, eventually being sold for scrap in 1922.



Three looks at Carisbrook Castle make us wonder. Is the recently-found 1914 picture postcard (centre) really only a retouched peacetime picture, with funnel and livery changed as a convenient way of providing the lads on the hospital ship with a card to send home? Now compare the pre-war shot from our archives (top), and the no-nonsense war record of battered Carisbrook Castle at anchor, kindly lent to us by the Imperial War Museum, (foot).

