



1 Picture: Jane Foster



2 Picture: Crainship Pictures



3 Picture: Jane Foster



4 Picture: Crainship Pictures



Picture: Jane Foster 5

Windsor Castle was launched by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother in June 1959. Whilst the ship was on her last voyage Sir Nicholas Cayzer received the following message from Her Majesty:

"Queen Elizabeth is extremely sad to know that Windsor Castle, which she had been so proud to launch and in which The Queen Mother has always taken such a keen interest, is making her final voyage on the Passenger Mail Service to South Africa, thereby bringing to an end a wonderful tradition of a hundred and twenty years of service by your Company.

"Queen Elizabeth knows well with what distinction Windsor Castle represented your line and what acclaim she received wherever she sailed. The Queen Mother asks if you would inform the Master and the Ship's Company how much they are in her thoughts at the completion of this passage, and at the same time to convey to you and to all those in the Union-Castle Company a message of Her Majesty's warmest good wishes."

Colonel Laurens van der Post travelled on the last voyage of Windsor Castle. At the Farewell Dance held on board on September 17, Colonel van der Post made a speech on behalf of the passengers, extracts from which we publish:

"I'm reminded of a famous English 19th Century Poet, of whom it was said that he was always dreaming he was addressing the House of Lords and one day woke up and found he was. Now, I feel not so much that I've been dreaming that for some years I have had a nightmare. A nightmare that this kind of travel, this kind of ship we are sailing in might be abolished, and I've just since Las Palmas woken-up and found that indeed this is so, and I wonder if we realise what precisely is being taken away from us. If we realise what these ships and the men who sail in them have given us—though not just in my lifetime, and I sailed first in these ships 65 years ago, but in what they have given us over the centuries—for what is coming to an end is not just the Union-Castle Line, but a great era in human history which started with the Renaissance—which started in an age to go out and discover and adventure, find new nations and new lands."

"We in South Africa, in Southern Africa I should say, because I think it holds good for Rhodesia as much as it does South Africa, we owe our existence to these ships. There is no country which has ever been so unique in the creation of ships, because ships gave us our raison d'être. We came to the Cape of Good Hope as a halfway-house to India as suppliers of food, vegetables and fresh meat to ships of precisely this kind, and in return the ships and the traffic they engendered made us grow and grow comparatively great."

"I was heartened by our departure from Cape Town, by the farewell we got—by the little ships that followed us out to sea and the tug sort of screaming 'Don't go'. The little mirrors flashing from Signal Hill and Sea Point—not in great big establishments, but tiny little houses tucked in all over the hills, as if the whole nation felt—we know what is being taken away from us."

"We know what friends we have had, what human contacts we have had given to us in the world with ships of this kind. Every year some 3,000 officers and sailors and men of these ships took something of Europe and brought it to us, and as friends took something of us and gave it to Europe."

"Captain Beadon and all his staff and every member of his crew have taught me in this voyage how little the dividing lines in the ship matter. How little it matters whether you are on deck, between decks or in the engine room. Where there is a world all at one doing a great human service for us all. I would like to say to them thank you. I would like to use the words which Africans in the interior in my part of Africa use when they see someone truly great. They say 'We have seen you, we praise you, and we thank you'. Captain Beadon, we would like to say to you and all your staff and men 'We have seen you, we thank you, and we praise you'—but we thank and praise you, not you only, but we thank you all in this ship as plenipotentiaries of 500 years of sailors and ships that have made us what we are. And we hope that somewhere, in some dimension, this praise and this thank you will get through and make life respond to make this end not an end, but the beginning of something new. And if that something new is half as good as what these ships have given us through history, I myself shall have renewed hope for the future."

1 The last passengers versus officers' cricket match played on Windsor Castle. The officers upheld the honour of the ship by winning both matches.

2 Children's Fancy Dress Parade.

3 A record £1600 was raised for the Sir Malcolm Sargent Cancer Fund for Children at the children's fair held during the homeward voyage. Our picture shows Graeme Perrier Robbie Ratt receiving the proceeds (left to right): Children's Hostess Corrie Anis and children's remainderless Sylvia Merrison and Ann Macdonald.

4 Staff Commander Arthur Wigham, Captain Patrick Beadon and Chief Purser John Diamond judge the fancy dress parade, the theme was

120 years of mail service. Escorting the announcement is Andrew Whitthouse, third purser.

5 The Windsor Castle formation dance team: from left John Wootton, Derek Mason, Robbie Ratt, and Peter Glenn, Ann Lewis, Carol Pemple, Pamela Steele and Carole Anis.

6 SA Vaal received tremendous farewells all along the South African coast. At Durban the Publicity Association arranged a spectacular send-off, with the Caldemoran Papers, the Durban Men's Choir and the Cabana Beach Zulu Dancers on the quayside. At Cape Town tens of thousands of people saw SA Vaal leave Table Bay for the last time.



8 Picture: Cape Times